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Volume 132, Number 25 Friday, May 11, 2012

UA announces new nominees

Institute committee chair positions still available

By Anne Cai

Nominees for UA officer positions were announced Monday evening. At a meeting this coming Tuesday, the UA Council will vote to officially appoint the nominees. Excluding the Chief of Staff, the nominees (see sidebar) were selected from an initial pool of about 40 students who applied for the 19 positions posted online at http://re-invent.mit.edu/apply, 20 of which were mostly interviewed by UA President Jonté D. Craighead '13 and Vice President Michael P. Walsh '13 in consultation with relevant committee members. The chief of staff's main responsibility is chairing the Nominations Committee, which includes "soliciting applications for representatives to Institute Committees, interviewing candidates, and selecting a slate of nominees," according to the UA Constitution.

"Given the urgent need for a chief of staff, we exclusively interviewed candidates with Institute Committee experience and conducted more in-depth interview with them," wrote Craighead to the UA Council Monday night in an email regarding nominations.

The chief of staff, treasurer, and secretary must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the UA Council at Tuesday's meeting, and the Finance Board chair must be approved by a majority vote. The remaining nominees for officers and committee chairs will be confirmed if fewer than five objections by Council Representatives against them are registered by Tuesday. If more there are more than five objections, the nominee will require approval by a majority of the Council vote. There is no reason to suspect the nominations will not be approved.

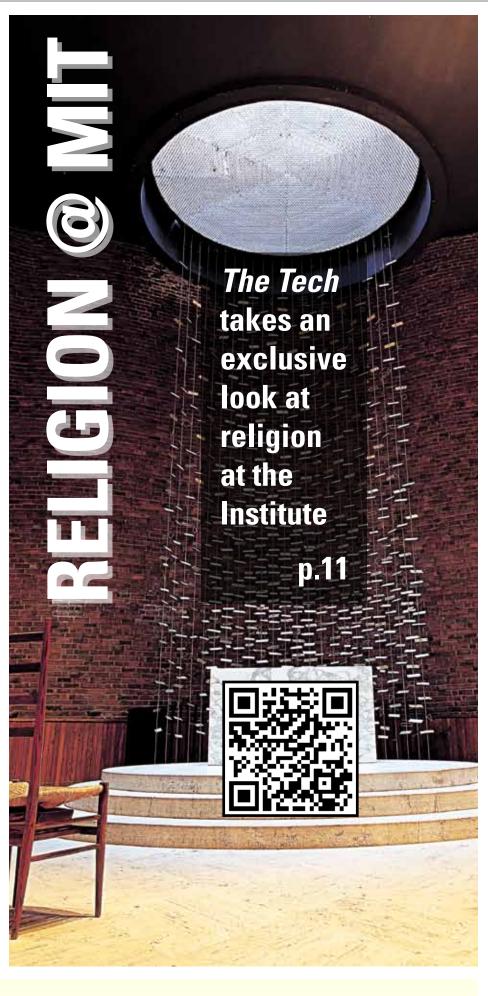
About nine of the originally advertised positions remain to be filled, and the UA plans to continue accepting applications.

'We are going to continue interviewing candidates from our application pool to find a place for everyone who was interested in a leadership position," wrote Craighead in an email to *The Tech*. Positions with no candidates as of yet may be left temporarily vacant "depending on the relative importance of the positions."

As the UA Council will not be in session during the summer, nominees selected after next Tuesday may be appointed by the president as acting officers and chairs as per the new UA Constitution, and they will undergo the same approval process at the first meeting when the Council reconvenes in the fall.

"Ideally, we would have preferred to have all of the nominations prepared [by the meeting]," wrote Craighead to the UA Council, "but given the lateness of elections, we are prioritizing quality candidates over hastened candidate reviews.'

With an email sent to all undergraduates last night, the UA Nominations Committee, chaired by the chief of staff, has begun soliciting applications from students for Institute Committee positions, with a priority deadline of May 13 and a final deadline of May 18.



Maseeh, home of the arts

Expressions event series crosses the art-science divide

By Naina Mehta

Throughout March and April, Maseeh Hall hosted a series of events known as Expressions, which merged arts with the sciences. Expressions was comprised of three events - a Master's Tea, a lecture, and an art reception.

The first event of the series was the Master's Tea. The Tea, which will become its own ongoing program, is a series of informal meetings hosted in the housemasters' apartment for a limited number of students to meet and chat with a prominent figure or celebrity. The inaugural Master's Tea event during Expressions, attended by around 20 students, featured John Bohannon, a Science reporter famous for his "Dance Your PhD" presentations in a TED (Technology, Entertaiment and Design) talk. The discussion focused on Bohannon's exploration of dance as an alternative to Power-Point slides as a way to relay scientific

"As soon as I watched John's TED video I was amazed and I RSVP'd." said Francisco X. Peña '15. "How often do I get to hang out with TED speakers?" Peña, a dancer, added that he found the idea of conveying messages through dance unique and interesting.

"John had us play a game where he listed the titles of different PhD theses and then showed us a clip from the dance, so we had to guess which clip matched to which title," said Katie L. Villa G, a Maseeh Graduate Resident Tutor (GRT). "He also talked a bit about his life and personal ca-

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Nominees for 2012-2013 Undergraduate Association leadership

Principal Officers

Chief of Staff

Ravi M. Charan '14 Bexley Hall

Treasurer

George H. Bailey '14 Burton-Conner

Secretary

Christine M. Sowa '14 Maseeh Hall

Assistant Vice Presidents

Engagement & Member Development

Alec C. Lai '13 Next House Sheila Lee '13 McCormick Hall

Institute Events & Events

Committee

Cara C. Brown '13 New House

Committee Chairs

Finance Board

Cory D. Hernandez '14 Senior House

Special Projects Committee Amanda C. David '13

McCormick Hall Anika Gupta '14

Bexley Hall **Athletics Committee**

Stephen A. Freiberg '13 Burton-Conner

Sustainability Committee

Jennifer K. Liu '14 Burton-Conner

Working Group Chairs

Chair, MIT 2030

Patrick A. Hulin '14 East Campus

Chair, MITx

Timothy R. Jenks '13 Zeta Psi

IN SHORT

Ring Delivery for the Class of **2014 is today** at the John Joseph Moakley Courthouse from 7 to

Senior Ball for the Class of 2012 is Saturday at the Sheraton Boston hotel from 6:45 p.m. to midnight.

The MITWE Concert is tonight in Kresge Auditorium at 8 p.m. Tickets are free online at http:// mitwebutterflies5-11-12.eventbrite.com/ or \$5 at the door.

The Toy Product Design class(2.00B)'s PLAYsentation event is Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in 10-250. Come see the final toy prototypes!

Send news information and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

THE INTERNET **COMES TO MIT**

ROFLCon returns to the Institute for its epic conclusion.

CAMPUS LIFE, p. 9

STUDENTS, GET INVOLVED!

The UA wants you for an Institute Committee! **LETTERS**, p. 5

POLITICIZING THE RAID

Does Obama take too much credit for Bin Laden's death? OPINION, p. 5



CLASS COMPETITION

2.007 and 1.013 end the semester with a final project showdown. NEWS, p. 25

BURTON/DEPP/ CARTER/ELFMAN

The classic quartet returns for Dark Shadows. ARTS, p. 24

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Greeks look to socialist to form government

ATHENS, Greece - With Greece still rudderless after inconclusive elections, the leader of the Socialist party indicated Thursday that he might be able to establish common ground with the leader of the moderate Democratic Left Party and try to form a government that would extricate the country from a deepening political crisis that has angered its foreign creditors and roiled global markets.

Speaking a few hours after he received a presidential mandate to form a government, Evangelos Venizelos, the Socialist party's leader, and the third politician to be given the opportunity this week, said his proposal for a unity government was aimed at helping Greece "move beyond" its \$170 billion loan deal signed in February with foreign creditors and remain in the eurozone. He said it was virtually identical to the plan of the Democratic Left leader, Fotis Kouvelis.

'This is a good omen," Venizelos said. He added that he would continue talks Friday with the leader of the conservative New Democracy Party, Antonis Samaras, whose party placed first in the elections, and Alexis Tsipras, the leader of the Coalition of the Radical Left, known as Syriza, which beat the Socialists to clinch second place but failed to form a government this

—Niki Kitsantonis, The New York Times

Bank to pay \$202 million to settle suit on mortgages

Deutsche Bank agreed Thursday to pay the federal government more than \$200 million to settle accusations that it knowingly misled the Department of Housing and Urban Development about the quality of mortgages that later defaulted.

The defaults ultimately cost taxpayers about \$368 million. The settlement resolves a lawsuit filed against Deutsche in May 2011 by the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, Preet Bharara, along with HUD and the Department of Justice.

The home loans were issued by MortgageIT, a mortgage provider that Deutsche Bank bought in 2007. Under the terms of the settlement. Deutsche Bank admitted it should have known that MortgageIT's practices did not conform to HUD rules after it made the acquisition. The \$202 million settlement is a significant victory for the federal Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force, which was established to investigate the abuses that culminated in the financial crisis of 2008 and early 2009.

-Nelson D. Schwartz, The New York Times

Egyptian candidates clash in TV debate, an Arab first

CAIRO — Two of the leading candidates to become Egypt's next president clashed Thursday night in the Arab world's first televised presidential debate, trading barbs about their political histories and arguments about the role of religion in public life.

Two weeks before the scheduled May 23 start of the election to choose the first president since the ouster of Hosni Mubarak, Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh, a former leader of the Muslim Brotherhood campaigning as a liberal Islamist, faced Amr Moussa, a popular former diplomat campaigning as the stable alternative to an "experiment" in Islamist rule.

Moussa, 75 and a more confident debater, was far more aggressive than Aboul Fotouh, 60. But neither candidate delivered a knockout punch as the debate turned repeatedly to the polarizing question of the status of Islam in governance.

Moussa sought repeatedly to drive a wedge into Aboul Fotouh's unlikely coalition of secular-minded liberals, moderate Islamists and the ultraconservatives known as Salafis. "He uses double language," Moussa charged. "He's a Salafi with Salafis, he's centrist with centrists, and he's a liberal with liberals, and there's a question mark."

–David D. Kirkpatrick, The New York Times

Germany likely to allow modest growth policy in Europe

By Nicholas Kulish and Jack Ewing

THE NEW YORK TIMES

BERLIN — The outlines of a potential compromise in Europe's battle between deficit-cutting austerity and policies to promote growth has begun to take shape. The question is whether the kind of cautious measures palatable to Germany, austerity's champion, will do enough to combat the Continent's imbalances and do it soon enough to put its weaker countries on more solid economic footing.

In typical German fashion, the steps under discussion are incremental and spread across a range of policy areas so as not to raise the ire of German voters. Germany's rigid central bank has signaled a willingness to tolerate slightly higher inflation, while the government has indicated its openness to modest but real wage growth in Germany.

Most important for the stricken economies, the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, may be prepared to accept a longer timetable for curtailing budget deficits for countries like Spain that are reeling from recession. For Merkel, the most important prize is ratification of the financial compact, signed in March by the leaders of 25 of the 27 European Union countries, to control deficits in the long run.

Ever since the victory of Francois Hollande in the French presidential election on Sunday, the debate in Europe has shifted, with attention focusing on Merkel's growing isolation over austerity and whether she would yield to calls for stimulus spending to promote short-term economic growth.

The recognition seems to be dawning even here that forcing heavily indebted countries to cut spending too quickly and deeply can be counterproductive. "The mood appears to be shifting in Germany," said Sebastian Dullien, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin. "Even conservative economists are beginning to question whether this austerity is too brutal at the moment."

Despite marked differences in tone between Merkel and Hol-

lande, they may not be so far apart in substance, said Mujtaba Rahman, an analyst at Eurasia Group, a consultancy in New York. Germany may ultimately accept minor adjustments to Greece's aid program if a viable government emerges, Rahman said.

"This is Germany's way of signaling both to Hollande and the Greek political elite it is willing to be constructive to keep the system together," Rahman said.

German officials have been adamant in their public statements that there would be no renegotiation with the Greeks of the terms of the bailout. The sharp reduction in public spending in the teeth of a recession has sent Greek unemployment over 20 percent and, in Sunday's elections, brought radical parties on the right and left into Parliament.

Speaking at a news conference in Berlin on Thursday, Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble repeated Germany's mantra that Greece had to stand by its commitments, but this time he added the new element that Berlin could tolerate a slightly higher inflation rate.

House approves \$310 billion in cuts, shifts savings to Pentagon

By Jonathan Weisman

WASHINGTON — The House on Thursday approved sweeping legislation to cut \$310 billion from the deficit over the next decade — much of it from programs for the poor and to shift some of that savings to the Pentagon to stave off automatic military spending cuts scheduled for next year.

The legislation has no chance of passing the Senate and will not become law. The White House issued a veto threat, saying the bill would "fail the test of fairness and shared responsibility." But its prescriptions and priorities could define the 2012 congressional elections - and are likely to affect the race for the White

Republicans framed the fight as a test of seriousness, saying their party was the only one willing to make the difficult choices necessary to tame the deficit. President Barack Obama's polices are "not working," said Rep. Paul D. Ryan of Wisconsin, the Budget Committee chairman.

"We need to change these policies. We need to grow the economy," he said. "We're leading."

Democrats said Republicans had become captives to a pledge never to raise taxes, foisting on Congress a draconian plan that "asks more from those who have less and less from those who have more," as Rep. Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, the No. 2 House Democrat, put it.

Rep. Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, the budget committee's ranking Democrat, said: "If you say from the beginning you're not going to ask people making a million dollars a vear to help do a little more to reduce our common deficit, if you say you're not going to ask companies that have these tax loopholes that actually incentivize them to ship jobs overseas to pay a little bit more, what do you

do? Your budget has to whack everyone else."

The bill's political sensitivity came through in the 218-199 vote. Democrats were united in their opposition. Sixteen Republicans sided with the Democrats, and one Republican voted present.

The legislation laid bare a small portion of the details needed to fill in the broad strokes of the House Republican budget that passed in March. That budget instructed six committees to find at least \$261 billion in savings from domestic programs and policies to defuse \$55 billion in automatic Pentagon cuts scheduled to hit Jan. 1 under last year's agreement to raise the federal

To do that, the committees cut food stamps, children's health insurance and Medicaid, and eliminated the Social Services Block Grant to state and local governments, among other things.

Sunny skies to return this weekend

By Allison A. Wing

STAFF METEOROLOGIST

After a couple days of clouds and rain, the sun will return just in time for the weekend. As a low pressure system exits the region today, lingering showers should be limited to this morning with the skies clearing as we move into the evening hours. Tomorrow, an upper level ridge and surface high pressure will build over New York and the off the mid-Atlantic coast, respectively.

This will cause flow from

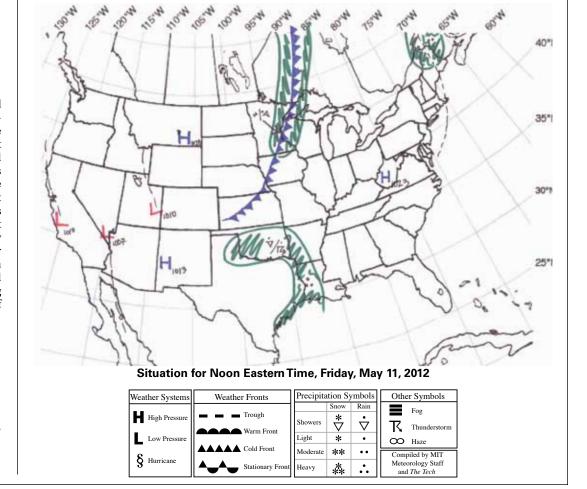
the northwest in Boston, and mostly sunny skies. With temperatures expected to be in the 70s, it will be a great day to get outside before the next round of unsettled weather returns next week. On Sunday, as the upper level ridge flattens out and a cold front approaches from Quebec, it should get cloudier as the day goes on. By Monday, we will be in a similar setup as this past week, with a nearly stationary front and weak disturbances moving along it through the middle of next week.

Extended Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy. High 67°F (19°C). Tonight: Partly cloudy. Low 47°F (8°C).

Tomorrow: Sunny. High 75°F (24°C). Low 57°F (14°C).

Sunday: Partly cloudy High 76°F (24°C). Low 55°F (13°C). Monday: Mostly cloudy. High 71°F (22°C). Low 56°F (13°C).



As Putin puts off meeting Obama, analysts consider future

By Helene Cooper, Steven Lee Myers, and Ellen Barry

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The first meeting between President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir V. Putin as the leaders of their respective countries was supposed to be an ice-breaker, a moment for two outsize figures to put behind them some of the friction that surrounded the Russian elections two months ago.

But the announcement Wednesday that Putin would skip the Group of Eight summit meeting of world leaders next week at Camp David — a gathering that Obama had promoted as an opportunity to "spend time" with Putin — bewildered foreign policy experts in both countries who have been waiting to see how the two leaders would get on.

During a phone call Thursday, Russia's foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, assured Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton that the cancellation was "not political," a State Department official said. Other administration officials said they accepted Putin's stated reason for canceling his trip — he told Obama that he had to finish setting up his new

In fact, during a meeting last week $\,$ in Moscow with Obama's national security adviser, Thomas E. Donilon, which was supposed to set up the Camp David meeting, Putin had warned that he might have to send his prime minister (and the former president), Dmitry A. Medvedev, in his place, according to a senior administration official with knowledge of the meeting.

But wasn't Medvedev supposed to be the one in charge of setting up the cabinet, Donilon asked. Putin, the official said, replied that while the prime minister would make the initial appointments, it was he, as president, who had to approve them. Putin promised to call Obama on Tuesday or Wednesday with his decision. And Wednesday, he did.

"Not that there aren't big fights going on in Moscow, but that he can't come to the G-8 because of that, I completely do not buy," said Andrew Kuchins, director of the Russia and Eurasia program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It's really bizarre. Oh, so the prime minister, who actually runs the cabinet, he can go to the G-8, but Putin

U.S. and Russian officials said the two men would meet in Mexico next month at the Group of 20 meeting.

Irritants remain in relations between the countries, including the deployment of a missile defense system that Russia considers a threat, and Russia's defense of President Bashar Assad of Syria. The abrupt change of plans, however, comes as U.S. and Russian officials appeared to be signaling that they were prepared for relations to get back to normal, after the anti-American rhetoric that characterized Putin's campaign.

Chinese economy losing some of its sizzle, import growth halts

By Keith Bradsher

THE NEW YORK TIMES

HONG KONG - As China's leaders have been preoccupied with a political struggle leading up to a once-in-a-decade leadership change this autumn, there are increasing signs that the Chinese economy may be running into

China announced Thursday that growth in imports had unexpectedly come to a screeching halt in April — rising just 0.3 percent from the same period a year earlier, compared with expectations for an 11 percent increase. Businesses across the country appeared to lose much of their appetite for products as varied as iron ore and computer chips.

China has been the largest sin-

growth in recent years, and a sustained slowdown in its economy could pose problems for many other countries. Particularly exposed are countries that export commodities like iron ore and oil and rely on demand from China's steel mills and ever-growing ranks of car owners.

Exports, a cornerstone of China's economic growth over the past three decades, grew 4.9 percent last month - half as much as economists had expected. And a slump in new orders over the past month at the Canton Fair, China's main marketplace for exporters and foreign buyers, suggests that overseas shipments by the world's second-biggest economy, after that of the United States, may not recover quickly.

Growth in other sectors appears to be slowing, too, particularly in Chinese real estate data provider, released figures Monday showing that residential land sales in the country's 20 largest cities had fallen 92 percent last week from the week before, as declining prices for apartments have left developers short of cash and reluctant to start further projects.

In a series of interviews over the past week, bankers and senior executives from provinces all over China, in a range of light and heavy industries, cited a broad deterioration in business conditions. Two of them said that some tax agencies in smaller cities had been telling companies to inflate their sales and profits to make local economic growth look less weak than it really was, while reassuring the companies that their actual tax bills would

Afghan police forces deflect Taliban attack on governor

KABUL, Afghanistan — An attack by six Taliban infiltrators in the eastern province of Paktika on Thursday killed three police officers but was put down before it reached the government offices that were its target, Afghan officials said.

The fighting again put the spotlight on the Afghan Local Police force, which is trained by U.S. special operations personnel and is seen as a critical hedge against the Taliban as Western forces begin withdrawing. The Local Police force, which was part of the response to the Paktika attack, has been the focus of intensified Taliban assaults as the annual fighting season has gotten under way.

The attack began when six gunmen wearing explosive vests under Local Police uniforms tried to pass through a security checkpoint near the district governor's building. Police forces stopped the men to question them, and a gun battle broke out, eventually stretching to two hours before the last attacker was killed.

Two attackers detonated their explosives during the fight, but no civilians were hurt. Two members of the Afghan Local Police and one member of the national police force were killed.

-Graham Bowley, The New York Times

Pentagon stresses efforts to recover US soldier

WASHINGTON — The U.S. government is doing everything possible to locate Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who is being held captive by insurgents after being seized in Afghanistan in 2009, the Pentagon's top civilian and military leaders said Thursday.

"Our heart goes out to the Bergdahl family," Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said. "We share the concerns about Bergdahl and the importance of getting him returned. And we're doing everything possible to try to see if we can make that happen."

Joining Panetta at a news briefing, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the family of the 26-yearold sergeant had been to his office to discuss the efforts that remain

"I can assure you that we are doing everything in our power, using our intelligence resources across the government, to try to find, locate him," Dempsey said.

Their comments came after the Bergdahl family broke a yearlong silence to disclose that Bergdahl, the only U.S. soldier held captive by the insurgents, is a part of secret negotiations between the Obama administration and the Taliban over a proposed prisoner exchange. —Thom Shanker, The New York Times

JPMorgan Chase loses \$2 billion from trades

JPMorgan Chase, which emerged from the financial crisis as the nation's biggest bank, disclosed Thursday that it lost more than \$2 billion in trading, a surprising stumble that promises to escalate the debate over whether regulations need to rein in trading by banks.

Jamie Dimon, the chief executive of JPMorgan, blamed "errors, sloppiness and bad judgment" for the loss, which stemmed from a hedging strategy that backfired. The trading roiled markets a month ago, when rumors started circulating of a JPMorgan trader in London whose bets were so big that he was nicknamed "the London Whale" and "Voldemort," after the Harry Potter villain.

For a bank that earned nearly \$19 billion last year, the trading loss, which could go higher, will not cripple it in any way. Still, it demonstrates how a market blunder can shake even a financial giant that celebrates its "fortress balance sheet."



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Represent students by joining an Institute Committee

With the new school year coming up, and transitions in the UA, now is the time for you to become involved in your student government. The Nominations Committee has recently sent out an application for positions on Institute Committees, and we encourage you to apply. These committees are maintained by, among others, the faculty and the president, and are responsible for myriad aspects of the Institute's governance.

Your voices on these committees are respected and a critical component of student input for the faculty and administration. Students have no power when they say nothing; students in this capacity work with

faculty and administrators on a number of

For example, students serve on the Committee on Academic Progress (CAP), the Committee on Discipline, the Committee on Student Life (CSL), the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid (CUAFA), and the Medical Consumer's Advisory Council. In their capacity as representatives, students have offered input on changes to the GIRs including the HASS requirement and the communications requirement, and also reviewed new degree programs, including the recent 6-7 joint degree and the new 10-ENG degree.

A full listing of the committees is avail-

able on the UA website (http://ua.mit.edu) and the application can be found there as well. The priority deadline is Sunday, May 13 at midnight, and the final deadline is Friday, May 18 at midnight. By applying, you can add your voice and your peers to the discussion, and empower undergraduates to improve MIT. We urge you to become more involved in your student government, your campus, and your education: apply today and help us be heard.

elect, Patrick A. Hulin '14, Sneha T. Kannan '13, Arun K. Saigal '13, Naren P. Tallapragada '13

The UA Nominations Committee Ravi M. Charan '14, chair-elect, Michael P. Walsh '13, vice chair and UA vice president-

PUTIN III

On top and in control

Will Putin return in 2018?

By Florence Gallez STAFF COLUMINST

Despite the predictions of a diminished Putin and a shaky Russia in the near future, Putin seems to be fine and to be defying those very predictions. He has certainly demonstrated that he can maintain himself at the top of a gigantic country through turbulent times and difficulties, and has proved to be a master engineer of his own destiny. He is now ready to start on the final phase of his craftily concocted comeback - or perhaps not so final should he decide to run again in 2018, which is very possible, even likely.

Of course, a "strong" Russia in the Western sense needs an entirely different

formula: one based on the rule of law, ethics, and respect for human rights, to cite just a few of the essentials. And it is here that the emerging activism of the middle class comes in. But if we assess Putin more objectively than Western observers have tended to do, then the description above

If this picture looks too gloomy, one may find comfort in the certainty that there will be change in Russia — after Putin.

All in all, I may have sounded overly pessimistic — and I have certainly thrown a bucket of cold water on the West-supported pro-democratic mood and efforts. But if we want to instigate change, it helps to acknowledge where we are with a cool head and face the reality of the difficulties,

not deny them, as the U.S. and other foreign media have been doing through biases, misinformation, and embellishments in news reports. American and Western news organizations and independent journalists, I am looking at you, not so much at Putin and the Kremlin, whose tactics are crystal clear by now.

To be followed in 2018. Until then, Russians of all classes and means should make sure they don't hibernate, despite conductive conditions of déjà-vu in their political landscape. But the recent protests and growing civic awareness and action are certainly proof that they will not.

This article is the last in a series on Russia's presidential election, popular street protests, and Putin's new presidency.

Spiking the football

Bin Laden raid was politicized before it even took place

By A. J. Edelman

STAFF COLUMNIST

Recently President Obama has come under fire from both the left and the right for politicizing the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden, including a major campaign advertisement a speech from Afghanistan timed to the anniversary of the raid, and a campaign press-blitz intended to cement the decision as a 'gutsy call.' In the words of the campaign ad: "suppose the [SEALs] had been ... killed, the downside would have been horrible for him." Yes indeed, when American servicemen are killed, the political fallout is just

It was initially believed that the politicization of the raid began after it was successfully carried out. However, in an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal, former Attorney General Michael Mukasey revealed that a recently disclosed memo from then-CIA Director Leon Panetta had a built-in political insurance policy should the raid have failed: the blame would be shifted to Admiral William McRaven, then-Commander of the Joint Special Operations Command Accord ing to the memo, "The timing, operational decision making and control are in Admiral McRaven's hands. The approval is

provided on the risk profile presented to the President ... The direction is to go in and get bin Laden and if he is not there, to get out." In other words, if the mission failed, it would be because Admiral McRaven failed to correctly oversee the mission. This shift-the-blame political insurance policy is sadly illustrative of the extent that the raid has been politicized, even prior to its execution.

President Harry Truman famously adorned his desk with a sign which read "The Buck Stops Here." It was a simple statement intended to highlight the fact that regardless of outcome, good or bad, the President is responsible for events that take place under his watch. Bush took responsibility for Katrina, Reagan took responsibility for the Iran-Contra Affair, and it would seem to make sense that Obama would have taken responsibility for the raid had it failed. Yet it doesn't seem to be the case.

There is nothing wrong with pointing to a policy accomplishment in a political campaign, but the unfortunate truth about the Bin Laden raid is that this historic mission by some of America's bravest men and women was politicized to a disturbingly high degree. Indeed, the president's post-raid press conference sounded like a promotional video. In the first few sentences detailing the raid, the President mentioned "I," "me", or "my" a total of nine times, all in reference to his decision making. This was a stark contrast to historical precedent - presidents Washington, Lincoln, Polk, Wilson, Truman, Reagan, and both Bush's gave speeches following major wartime decisions, and in all such speeches the President was barely mentioned, if at all. The main subjects of those speeches were the sacrifices of the brave men and women and the causes for which they valiantly defended the United States. In President Bush's speech after the capture of Saddam Hussein, the term "I" was only mentioned in the context of "[thanking] the members of our military and congratulating them."

When given a chance recently to respond to the criticism directed against him, President Obama stayed the course, insisting that "I said that I'd go after bin Laden if we had a clear shot at him, and

The problem is not that the raid has been politicized, it's the degree to which it was. President Obama should be congratulated on this accomplishment, but in the future it would do him well to spend less time focusing on the political angle of a decision and more on the decision itself, and those who ultimately carry it out.

will not be accepted. The Tech reserves the right to edit or

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community.

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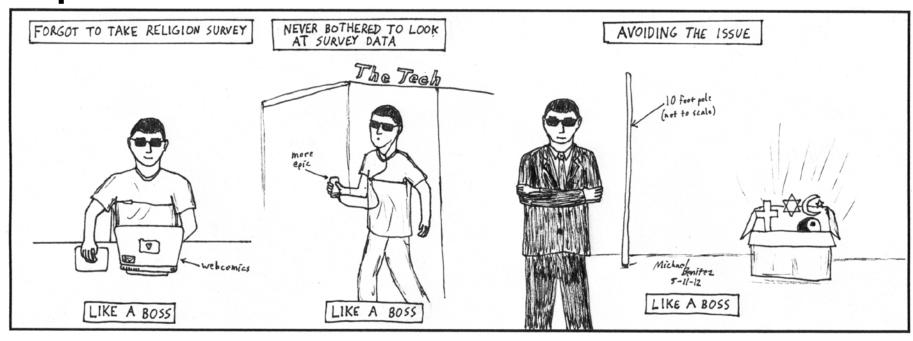
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Help Desk by Michael Benitez

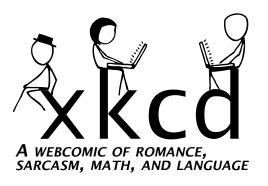


UPPERCUT by Steven Sullivan









by Randall Munroe

[1049] Bookshelf









tence, but getting lost at 'therefore, be a huge asshole to everyone.' I had a hard time with Ayn Rand because I found myself enthusiastically agreeing with the first 90% of every sen-

SHELL GAME by Billie Truitt

Solution, page 10

ACROSS

- 1 Get to
- 6 Ingenious
- 11 Includes in an email
- 14 Political exile, for short
- 15 Like some eclipses 16 Chaotic scene
- 17 Capsizes
- 19 Busy activity
- 20 Brief admission
- 21 "Couples only" ship? 22 Maze solver
- 24 House minority leader
- 26 Refer to
- 27 Well-worn story
- 33 Stun gun
- 37 S&L offerings
- 38 Inflection
- 39 In unison
- 40 "Send help!"
- 41 Halloween costume
- 42 Bits of fluff
- 43 Book after Joel
- 44 Take to the stump
- 45 Failing spectacularly

- 48 Loop shape
- 49 Raskethall stat
- 54 Go-to guy
- 57 Scratch, as a surface
- 59 Chorus members
- 60 Justice Dept. agency
- 61 Miracle remedy
- 64 MSN rival
- 65 Make restitution
- 66 Love Story author 67 Size much bigger than M
- 68 Some jeans
- 69 Burning evidence

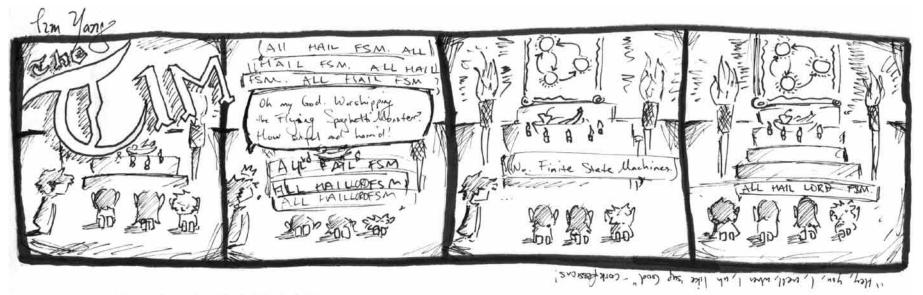
DOWN

- 1 Repair a pool cue
- 2 Radiate
- 3 Month that Revere rode
- 4 "No problem!"
- 5 Shaker . OH
- 6 Aspersion
- 7 Gloomy darkness
- 8 Crumb carrier 9 Comes from behind
- 10 Picks up the tab

- 11 Autocrat
- 12 Musical postscript
- 13 Flue coating
- 18 Part of a dress shirt
- 23 Well again
- 25 Aching
- 26 Sliding dance step
- 28 Cheerless
- 29 Sing soothingly 30 Stellar phenomenon
- 31 Condo dwelling
- 32 Prefix for path
- 33 Towering
- 34 Much of the Old World
- 35 PlayStation maker
- 36 Lure
- 41 Feet, so to speak
- 43 Shake up
- 46 Garden-variety 47 Clothing
- 50 Hawthorne's
- hometown 51 "Send me"
- 52 Chop alternative
- 18 20 21 22 23 24 25 28 | 29 30 |31 |32 27 37 33 |34 |35 |36 38 40 39 41 44 42 43 45 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 | 55 | 56 57 | 58 60 64 65 66 68
 - 53 Championship
 - 54 Document sent online
 - 55 PlayStation alternative
 - 56 Sourpuss
- 57 Skirt length
- 58 Breezes through 62 www.oregon._
- 63 Aircraft carrier designation

Friday, May 11, 2012

The Tech 7



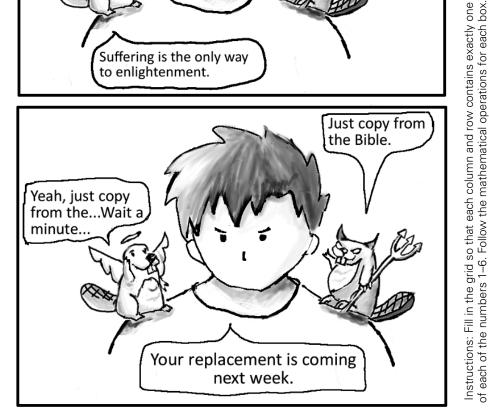


... WE ARE SO CUTE TOGETHER IT MAKES ME STCK.

Beaver Tails by Ranbel Sun







Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Sudoku

Solution, page 10

		1			8			
	6			1				
	5	3	2	6			7	
		7			6	9		
4	1	6				9	5	8
		2	4			7		
	2			7	5	6	3	
				9			3 2	
			6			8		

Techdoku

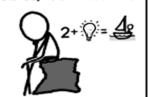
Solution, page 10

	20+			6+	6
1	-	24×	 		3
42×		 	12×	<u> </u>	1
	19+		-		7
<u> </u>			20+		4
	5×		 	2-	
	3-		┪┈┈	2-	
		1 42× 19+	1 24x 42x 19+	1 24x 12x 12x 12x 20+	1 24x 12x 12x 20+ 5x 2-

EVERY MAJOR'S TERRIBLE TO THE TONE OF GILBERT & SOLLMAN'S MODERN MAJOR-GENERAL SONG

(WHICH YOU MAY KNOW FROM TOM LEHRER'S *ELEMENTS*. IF NOT, JUST HUM *SUPERCOURRAGIUSTICENPIALIDOCIOUS*.)

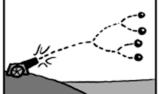
PHILOSOPHY'S JUST MATH SANS RIGOR, SENSE, AND PRACTICAUTY



WHY ANYONE WHO

WANTS A JOB WOULD

AND MATH'S JUST PHYSICS UNCONSTRAINED BY PRECEPTS OF REALITY.



JUST ATHING YOU GET SO YOU CAN GRADUATE

A BUSINESS MAJOR'S



A LITTLE LESS THAN

IF YOU'D LEARNED TO

Underwater Basket-Weave

AND CHEMISTRY'S FOR

STAMP COLLECTORS

HIGH ON METHYLACETATE



UNLESS THEIR ONLY OTHER CHOICE WERE SOMETHING STUDY LIT'S A MYSTERY LIKE ART HISTORY.





GUARANTEES THAT

YOU'LL ACHIEVE





I'D RATHER EAT A FOWLER'S TOAD THAN MATOR IN BIOLOGY,



AND SOCIAL PSYCH IS Worse than Either PSYCH OF SOCIOLOGY.



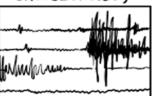
THE THOUGHT OF PICKING ANY ONE OF THESE IS TOO UNBEARABLE.



JUST PUTME DOWN AS "UNDECIDED"-EVERY MAJOR'S TERRIBLE.



NOW, IF YOU CAN'T OK IN SEISMOLOGY,



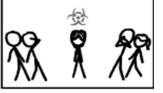
BUT IF YOUR HINDSIGHT'S WEAK AS WELL, YOU'D BEST STICK TO THEOLOGY.



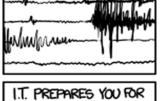
CS WILL MAKE EACH DAYA QUEST TO FIND A MISSING CLOSE-PAREN.



VIROLOGY WILL GUARANTEE YOU'LL NEVER GET A HUG AGAIN.



PROGNOSTICATE, THAT'S



A LIFE OF FIGHTING

WITH PCs NONSTOP

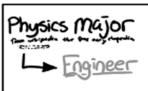
AS PRATCHETT SAID,



THOUGH PHYSICS SEEMS TO Promise you a Richard FEYNMAN-UKE CAREER,



THE WIKI PAGE FOR "Physics Major" redirects to "Engineer","

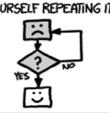


by Randall Munroe [1052]

SARCASM, MATH, AND LANGUAGE



THEY SAY TO STUDY



BUT ALLTHAT IT PREPARES YOU FOR IS FORTY YEARS OF TEACHING IT.



I RECOGNIZE MY FOUR-YEAR PLAN'S AT THIS POINT NOT REPAIRABLE,



BUT PUT ME DOWN AS "UNDECIDED"—EVERY MAJOR'S TERRIBLE.



ASTRONOMERS ALL CRINGE WHEN THEY HEAR "SUPERMOON" OR "ZODIAC".



AGRONOMY'S A NO-GO; I'M A HUGE AGOROPHOBIAC.



I'M TOO OPHIOPHOBIC TO CONSIDER HERPETOLOGY,



AND I CAN'T STOMACH ANY PART OF GASTROENTEROLOGY.



WHILE PRE-MED GIVES YOU TWITCHY-EYED OBSESSION WITH YOUR GPA.



poetry degree bespeaks bewildering naïveté.



TVS BEHIND THE RUSH INTO FORENSIC CRIMINOLOGY



(OR SO CLAIMS META-ACADEMIC EPIDEMIOLOGY).



BY DUBBING ECON "DISMAL SCIENCE" ADHERENTS EXAGGERATE;



THE "DISMAL"'S FINE-ITS "SCIENCE" WHERE THEY PATENTLY PREVARICATE.



IN TERMS OF CHOICES, I'D SAY ONLY SOPHIE'S WAS COMPARABLE.



JUST PUTME DOWN AS "UNDECIDED" — EVERY MAJOR'S TERRIBLE!



Someday I'll be the first to get a Ph. D in 'Undeclared'

CONVENTION REVIEW

I can has Internet?

The final ROFLcon features memes, activism, commercialism, and nostalgia

By Stephen Suen

Last weekend, the biggest names in Internet fame, academia, and entrepreneurship descended upon MIT for the third installment of ROFLCon, a biennial celebration of web culture. From accidental celebrities such as Scumbag Steve and Chuck Testa to researchers like hacker anthropologist Biella Coleman and MIT's own Ethan Zuckerman, a diverse cast of guests came together to unite under the common banner of "the Internets." Prior to the keynote speech, event co-founder Christina Xu put it succinctly: "One out of eight people in this room has done something crazy on the Internet."

In his opening address on Friday morning, keynote speaker Jonathan Zittrain of Harvard Law School sympathized with conference attendees, "It's hard to explain what you're doing this weekend to friends and family who are not part of this tribe." But with the diversity of subcultures on the Internet — one of the fundamental affordances of online networks — is it really accurate to condense all of them into a single tribe?

At its very core, this year's ROFLCon was an attempt to wrestle with the Internet's ongoing identity crisis, to try and find some unifying theory bringing together the disparate strands that characterize the state of the Internet today: the hacktivism of Anonymous, the meteoric cultural rise and commercialization of Internet memes, debate over real-names policies and other privacy concerns, the Arab Spring and other international revolutions, radically new business and content distribution models, and the ongoing battle over copyright and cybersecurity bills such as SOPA, ACTA, and most recently CISPA.

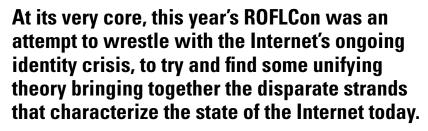
fanfiction and fanart circles.

Other panels were simply fanservice — such as a solo panel with Internet creator Neil Cicierega, probably best known for his work on "Potter Puppet Pals." The panel featuring Wieden+Kennedy's Craig Allen — the creative director behind the "Man Your Man Could Smell Like" Old Spice ad campaign7 — ultimately became a Skype video Q&A with actor Isaiah Mustafa himself.

Despite the huge diversity of subcultures and fandoms represented at ROFLCon, certain recurring themes were felt throughout the conference. For one, multiple speakers mentioned the dark side of being Internet famous. In his talk, Zittrain proposed the creation of an infrastructure that would allow people to "opt out" of the sometimes-unwelcome celebrity of memedom.

The Advice Animal panel — featuring Scumbag Steve and representatives from meme database Know Your Meme — took an unexpected turn when the discussion led to the ethics of the "I Can Count to Potato" macro, which features the image of a girl with Down syndrome. In response, Know Your Meme proposed creating guidelines to help the subjects of memes (and in this case, their parents) make good choices about how to respond to unintended Internet fame.

On the other hand, using memes to ridicule was also lauded as an effective political tool — Zittrain brought up how the Downfall parodies have transformed Hitler into a comedic character, while MIT Center for Civic Media director Ethan Zuckerman half-jokingly suggested the creation of a Scumbag Assad image macro to poke fun at Syria's current president. Indeed, the intersection of the Internet and politics was another overarching theme throughout ROFLCon.



Certainly, a good number of the panels at ROFLCon were not that serious in nature and instead focused on showcasing different aspects of Internet culture. The "Global Lulzes" panel, for example, celebrated Internet memes from other parts of the world — namely, China, Brazil, and Syria. Saturday's keynote speech chronicled the history of supercuts: fast-paced video montages of clips from film and TV, usually of a specific cliché or trope.

Several of the panels at ROFLCon focused on niche interests. The webcomic community was proudly represented by the artists of *Axe Cop, Cyanide & Happiness, Diesel Sweeties, Explodingdog, Loldwell,* and *SMBC*. One panel, dedicated to the subgenre of sadistically-difficult video games, featured the developers of running simulator *QWOP* and "masocore" platformer *I Wanna Be The Guy*. Another panel was dedicated to fangirl culture in general, bringing together some of the biggest names in the

For example, on the "LOLitics" panel, Mozilla's Dan Sinker described his experience running the @MayorEmanuel Twitter account, through which he told a distorted version of Rahm Emanuel's campaign for Mayor of Chicago. Latoya Peterson, editor of the blog Racialicious, discussed the "Shit X Says" meme, its permutations, and how it can be subverted for activist ends, as seen in "Shit Cis People Say to Trans People" or "Shit Everybody Says to Rape Victims." McGill University professor Biella Coleman discussed Anonymous and popular misrepresentations of the hacktivist organization, analyzing its interactions with the surveil-lance state.

In his solo panel, Ben Huh, CEO of I Can Has Cheezburger, also discussed intellectual property and how today's restrictive copyright paradigm is hindering the meme ecosystem and content creation at large. Even the closing panel of the convention, "Defending the Internet," revolved around



CHRISTOPHER A. MAYNOR—THE TECH

Meme-related products are displayed for sale at last Friday's ROFLCon III. Special guests at the "Internet culture conference" included Alan Schaaf, founder of Imgur, and Blake Boston, also known as "Scumbag Steve."

the recent slew of Internet-related bills such as SOPA and PIPA. The panel of Internet superstars — including Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian and Yale cyberlaw professor Elizabeth Stark — discussed how Internet policy decisions are made, and how that process needs to be improved.

Amidst these themes running throughout the conference, however, I noticed none more strongly than the collective sinking feeling that the Internet has jumped the shark. In the webcomics panel, *Diesel Sweeties* artist R. Stevens waxed nostalgic for the smaller, more intimate communities of the early Internet. In reference to Cheezburger's perceived commercialization of Internet culture, a heckler at Ben Huh's panel asked, "Why are you raping the Internet, sir?"

The fading YouTube celebrities on the "Channels Killed the (Internet) Video Star" bemoaned how a new industry of web content production has eroded the serendipitous spirit of early YouTube. Judson Laipply's "Evolution of Dance" video lost its spot on the YouTube Top 20 list to a Vevo music video, and — paraphrasing Matt Harding of the video series "Where the Hell is Matt?" — the medium has already been co-opted by marketers

4chan creator Christopher Poole, better known by his online handle "moot," mentioned in his panel that Internet memes — once a small niche of the web — are now everywhere; today net culture does not exist as something separate. "Anyone who has a computer now experiences net culture. Advice Dog is almost the refined sugar of memes: it's fine, it tastes good, but it's not good for you."

According to Poole, the ubiquity of memes has deprived them of richness. As emphasized during the panel on Nano-Fame, memes have now been distilled to the tiniest slivers of content — a few seconds of video, a single image. Today, they come and go faster than ever. Thus, it comes as no coincidence that this was the last RO-

FLCon (for now), as the "surprise ending" of the event program — styled as an old-school choose-your-own-adventure book — reveals.

"It's been an amazing run — more stupendously successful than we ever could have possibly imagined for now, we're putting this trilogy to bed and riding out into the sunset. Our lives are taking us to new and exciting places, so ROFLCon is on hiatus until we can figure out how to continue doing it great justice," went the pamphlet.

So, did ROFLCon achieve its goal? Was it successful in its quest to resolve the Internet's existential crisis?

No, I don't think so. The Internet has grown far too big and far too fragmented to be tamed, and our attempts to understand it asymptotically approach but never quite reach that unifying theory. Perhaps the discourse surrounding the Internet has become as saturated as the Internet itself, and all ROFLCon could do was implode on itself.

In the blue fanny packs given out to each attendee — mingled with the Goatsethemed ROFLCondoms and the limited edition holographic Nyan Cat pins — were stickers and other trinkets from companies specializing in predicting soon-to-be "viral" content or claiming to be able to reproduce similar rates of proliferation. Like the Internet it celebrates, ROFLCon, too, appears to have been co-opted by the marketers.

Despite the great victories (epic wins, rather) of the Internet and its vast potential to effect change and mobilize people, it is — like everything else that humankind has ever loved — being eaten up by commercial interests. That's why ROFLCon needs to die. With the way we are now, we can only shrug as Keyboard Cat plays it off. We can only hope that the convention will return one day — as something better — to save the Internet from itself.

For now? I'll be the first to say it: Goodnight, sweet prince.



10 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012

Solution to Sudoku

2	4	1	7	5	8	3	9	6
7	6	9	3	1	4	5	8	2
8	5		2		9	1	7	4
3	8	7	5	2	6	9	4	1
4	1	6	9	3	7	2	5	8
5	9	2	4	8	1	7	6	3
1	2	4	8	7	5	6	3	9
6	7	8	1	9	3	4	2	5
9	3	5	6	4	2	R	1	7

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Solutio	n to	Tech	doku
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3	4	5	2	7	1	6
7	1	2	6	4	5	3
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4	5	6	3	1	2	7
1	2	3	7	5	6	4
6	7	1	5	3	4	2
2	3	4	1	6	7	5

■ Solution to Crossword

- 1	ı	from page 6													
ΠI	IR	Ε	Α	C	Н		S	М	Α	R	T		С	С	S
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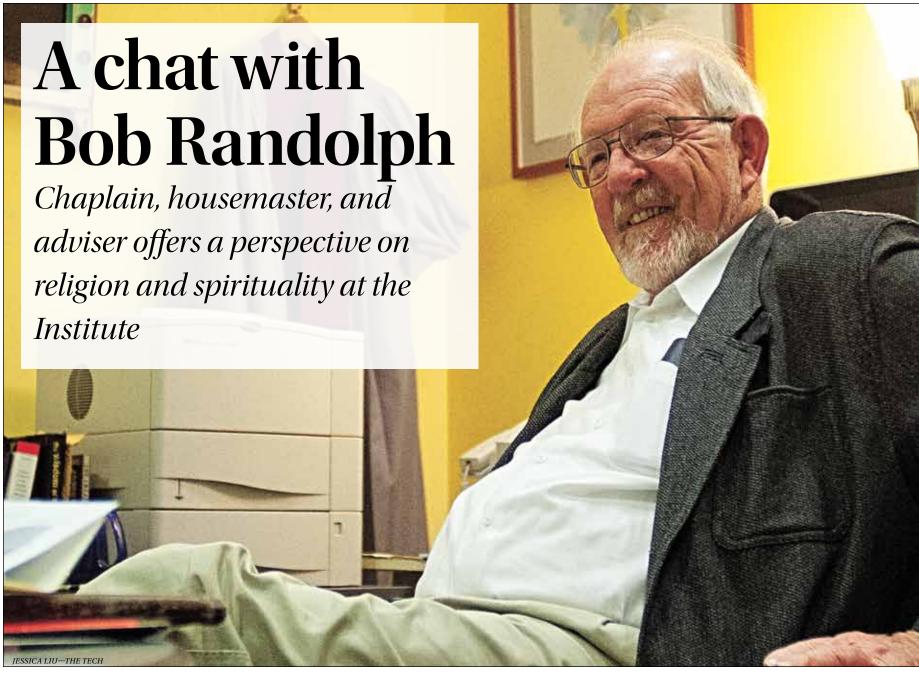
Massage 101

Saturday March 12th IPM-2PM Walker Memorial

Come with a friend and learn how to give a chair massage from a professional instructor. Friday, May 11, 2012
The Tech 11



12 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012



By Maggie Lloyd CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Chaplain Robert M. Randolph came to MIT in 1979 as an ordained minister and former chaplain at Dana Hall School in Wellesley. He served as an associate dean working as the head of counseling programs until he was appointed as Chaplain to the Institute in 2007. *The Tech* had a chance to sit down with Dean Randolph to discuss religion at MIT.

The Tech: So, what does the chaplain do? Robert Randolph: That's a good question. Part of what the chaplain does is manage this happy group of professionals. There are 16 chaplains on MIT's campus and we built this building [W11, the Religious Activities Center] in 1995. We made a decision to bring together all the religious communities at MIT and the chaplains that are here are people who are supported by particular religious traditions.

The difference between me and the rest of those groups is that while I am Christian, I am responsible for all the communities on campus, to make sure they are treated well, doing good work, and that they're getting along. And so, there was a lot of concern when we said to the students and to the groups...you're going to be in the space and it's going to be key that you all get along together.

When they asked me one night five years ago to become the chaplain to the Institute, that was one of the challenges, to make sure the playing field was level for everybody, that folks get along and that they learn from each other. The rationale for building this building and for us having everyone here was we wanted people to learn about the other, the stranger, the one they didn't know about while they were in college.

This was all before 9/11, understand. When 9/11 came along, we were in the position of saying "we have been learning to get along with each other and understand each other and it's been going well."

TT: At ceremonies where you give the opening prayer, such as commencement, how does that work to keep it non-denominational?

RR: I recognize that the community I'm speaking to has a varied spectrum. I always write my prayers in advance for graduation and make sure that in some ways it's "to whom it may concern." I try to say words that become what they need to become for the people hearing them. That is, if they can be challenging and maybe comforting or uplifting even to those that don't consider themselves religious. These days, a lot of people say, "I'm spiritual but I'm not particularly religious," which means that they're not

following a traditional pattern of religious behavior

TT: A little bit after you had been appointed as chaplain, Professor Joe Haldeman wrote in a letter to The Tech on January 9, 2008 titled "MIT Does Not Need a Chaplain" that asked why does MIT even need a chaplain, being a secular institution? ("Our students, especially the ones from America, have grown up in cultures saturated with religiosity. We should give them a little break from it while they're here. MIT needs religion like a bull needs mammaries," Haldeman wrote.) What do you say to people confused about the need for a chaplain on our campus?

'The problem is, it's not a secular institution. The truth is, for 18- to 22-year-olds, one of the issues on the table is who am I? What am I about?'

RR: The problem is, it's not a secular institution. The truth is, for 18- to 22-year-olds one of the issues on the table is who am I? What am I about? When you talk about holistic education, you need to recognize that people are asking these questions; you can't pretend that they're not. I joke that 30 minutes after MIT was founded the first Catholic priest had Mass on campus. We've had Catholic chaplains here since 1864. We don't tip our cap to one particular religious tradition, but religion has played an important role at MIT since its very founding. The chapel was built over 50 years ago. It's existed here since 1955.

TT: What is it like to also be a housemaster and an advisor along with your duties as chaplain?

RR: Well, I think that it is wonderful; personally I like it very much. Living with students makes you aware of what you don't know. You're constantly reminded of...what it's like to be 18-25. You can I think forget that if you get tied up primarily in the classroom. When you're watching students navigate the pitfalls of growing up, it's remarkable. From my point of view, it's an honor to be part of the process and to occasionally be helpful.

I became a housemaster for a year initially but I kept getting re-upped. Even in Bexley over the time I've been there I've had students who had regular religious gatherings inside the dormitory. My job is not to

impose that but to be supportive of that so that students who want to do those things have the opportunity. That would be the same case in the most religious dormitory. There, it might be that I'd be protecting the rights of the non-religious as opposed to the religious

TT: How else has religious life changed during your time at MIT?

RR: It ebbs and flows...We just put in place this new Kosher dining program; it's something we've been working on for 20 years. It's going to make an important difference for Jewish students and for Muslim students and for dialogue between the two communities, as they convene over food. Again, who would have thought that food suddenly becomes a way to promote world peace or at least understanding?

After 9/11 MIT was one of the few colleges in the city that didn't have Muslim students leave because they were afraid. Families and Muslim students [elsewhere] were fearful that their children would be harmed in the aftermath of the tragedy. We had Muslims, Christians, and Jews gathered on [Killian Court] to share prayers and to give support to one another. That's what should happen.

Now, one of the things we've done recently is meeting in the chapel on Tuesday mornings not for religious reasons but just to reflect together and to draw from the traditions that people bring. We do that partly because one of the things about this place is that we're so harried that we don't take time sometimes to reflect. It turns out that instead of being for students it is a time more for faculty and staff. For 20 minutes we come together, there's a presentation, there's some music, there's centering, and we have coffee. When in doubt, eat. It runs from 10 to 15 [attendees]. It's not large.

TT: Is there a reason why there is inconsistency in religious student group membership? Why do some religious student groups at MIT have 20-30 members whereas Hillel and the Tech Catholic Community have at least 100?

RR: Yeah, I think the reason why is that for example the Tech Catholic Community, the Muslim community, Hillel all draw from broad, worldwide bases. So, you can be Catholic and come from Great Britain, you can come from Mexico, you can come from Latin America, and one of the things I've always argued is that if you want to see diversity at MIT you should look at the religious communities. You'll see people from all over the world.

When we had the Cardinal [Sean O'Malley, a Roman Catholic counselor to the pope] here a few years ago, the line to greet him included students, faculty, and

staff, and people that we don't often notice like the cleaning staff. Religion cuts across the whole community.

Same with the Muslim community, I joke that the most coveted parking space out here is the one the cabs have when people come for prayers. Every cabbie who's Muslim has been here for prayer. That's a good thing.

TT: Our survey results show that about seven percent of freshmen and sophomores but about 14 percent of juniors and seniors say they dropped their religion since coming to MIT. What kind of influences are there at

'The rationale for us building [W11] and for us having everyone here was we wanted people to learn about the other, the stranger, the one they didn't know about.'

MIT that cause these changes?

RR: Well, I don't think it's just at MIT. Trying to find your way in the world, you tend to focus on those things that seem to be the most pressing. The most pressing may well not be your religious commitments, which tend to come back when you have family, you have children, you l to become more comfortable in your job. You know around here, a lot of people don't have time to eat, I mean that's just a fact. I've had people who come here and they used to play the cello a great deal and they gave it up and it breaks my heart. I wish they didn't feel they had to but then again I don't know what it's like to deal with some of these problem sets. I hope that eventually they'll come back to the cello, and so with their religious inclinations and when they come back to it they'll ask questions in a more sophisticated and thoughtful way. Often religion is thought of when you're

Offen religion is thought of when you re 18 as people telling you what not to do. The key is to understand that religious communities really ask a range of questions about what to do not what not to do.

What also happens when you're a college sophomore, college junior is you may for the first time encounter issues of life, death, mortality, fragility of human relationships. The resources that you draw on may be diverse but very often they'll be the resources that shaped you when you were younger and by the time you're 30 then you may come back to asking different questions about these things.

Why exactly do MIT students believe in a god? 'Topics in Philosophy of Religion' professor tackles the science vs. religion argument

By Maggie Lloyd

What does Professor Alex Byrne, who teaches 24.503, Topics in Philosophy of Religion, have to say about faith at MIT?

Scientists tend to be atheists," Byrne said. In an interview with The Tech, he mentioned that he was not surprised to hear that 69 percent of MIT atheists somewhat or strongly agree that it is difficult to reconcile science with religion, whereas 71 percent of religious students at MIT say they somewhat or strongly disagree with that statement.

"At MIT, rejecting the deliverances of science is not an option," he explained, "but MIT students are not happy with conflict. This is the natural way to arrive at atheism, I suppose, at least among the educated elite." Indeed, 94 percent of all survey respondents say that their religious beliefs do not conflict with their studies.

Among all respondents, 43 percent agree that it is difficult to reconcile science with religion, while 49 percent disagree. According to Byrne, word choice is key here. "It's misleading to call it a conflict between religion and science," he explained, "Rather, it's a conflict between facts and religion, or theory versus data. Any theory can be in apparent conflict with data." Imagine a murder case where the suspect's fingerprints aren't on the gun, he said. The theory is that the suspect is the murderer, but the facts suggest that he or she is not.

But outside of the MIT bubble, science plays a smaller role. "Most people in this country don't believe the theory of evolution is true, which is very different from western



Europe," Byrne said.

The Tech received a number of comments from students about the religion survey's blurred lines between religious beliefs and forms of non-belief.

MIT Philosophy Professor Alex Byrne

We asked Byrne to set the record straight. "Here's how I understand atheism. It's the view that there is no God or there are no gods," Byrne said. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, scientists thought they observed canals on Mars, and their hypothesis was that there must be intelligent beings on Mars. According to Byrne, members of the scientific community are now "atheists" with respect to martians because there are

no martians. "Religious atheism is exactly analogous to 'atheism' about martians," he

"Agnosticism is not having an opinion one way or the other," he explained, "For example, many people are agnostics about whether there is life elsewhere in our galaxy. They don't believe there is, and neither do they believe there isn't. Similarly, with religious agnosticism: the agnostic doesn't believe there is a god, neither does she believe there isn't one."

Giving another example, Byrne said, "None of us believe in Santa Claus; we do have a view in common that there is no such

being named Santa Claus. But what unites us is nothing very deep or interesting. Beyond that view everything can be as different as you like." Some people, he explained, pretend for the sake of their children that Santa Claus does exist.

According to Byrne, "I never really understood that strand in the New Atheist Movement where there's this suggestion that atheism is a way of life. Atheism is the most boring, inconsequential world view, just like the view that Santa Claus does not exist. It is not a way of life, and provides no guidance about how to live. People who say that atheism is not a 'religion' are making that point, and they are absolutely right."

Byrne's class has only been taught once; students comprised only of MIT graduate students in philosophy and a few Harvard Divinity School students. The class has not continued, Byrne explained, because no students specialize in it. There's "not this big clamor from the graduate community" for such classes, "which is a bit of a shame," he

A popular example in Byrne's class is to imagine a course 12 student who believes that catastrophic global warming will occur, whereas another student with access to the same evidence believes that it won't happen.

"What should you do in the face of this disagreement?" he asks, "Do you suspend judgment and take their argument into account, which is the appropriately modest thing to do, or stick to your guns? If you apply this to religion, people get uncomfortable. And there's a huge amount of religious disagreement. Shouldn't we both just give up our beliefs and become agnostic?"

Student leaders sound off on religion

Nearly 30 religious groups provide faith and family for MIT community

By Maggie Lloyd

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

With nearly 30 ASA-recognized religious student groups on campus, the MIT community is teeming with religious diversity. But, most of these groups have less than 30 members who regularly attend their events, and some groups are no longer active on campus or are ASA-recognized. According to Robert M. Randolph, Chaplain to the Institute, their presence on campus has been generally consistent. With so many groups, however, it is difficult to talk to everyone, and a number of groups did not respond to requests from The Tech.

Nevertheless, The Tech spoke with a number of leaders in these groups to see what it's like to be involved in religious life at MIT, and one thing's for sure: MIT's reputation as a leading science and engineering institution has caused skepticism towards its faith.

Chinua Shaw '13, Vice President the Baptist Student Fellowship and co-coordinator of the United Christian Organization (UCO), explained that "There is kind of a view that a lot of people have that tech schools aren't going to have much religion, and so I initially was unsure of what to expect, as were my parents, but actually during CPW, I ended up finding some of the community, I was really able to find that there was really a strong presence of the Christian community on campus."

Abubakar Abid '14, the events organizer for the Muslim Students Association (MSA), agrees. "Coming to MIT, I was concerned about maintaining my faith, not so much because I feared aggressive irreligion, but because I expected the religious communities to be somewhat silent. My biggest surprise has been to find that that's far from the case. Rather, I frequently see powerful displays of MIT students' faith in the way they dress, speak, and the events they organize," he

Aubrey J. Colter '13, President

of the Latter-day Saint Students Association (LDSSA), has also been impressed, "I have been pleasantly surprised to find that MIT is somewhere I can grow intellectually and spiritually," she said.

While MIT is a science place, religion is very, very alive here. The number and diversity of religious student groups is quite striking. The main challenge is that people get so busy with their work, that maybe there is not enough time for discussion of spiritual issues among members of the different groups," said Brian F. Aull PhD '85, the Baha'i representative on the Board of Chaplains.

Mark Jen-Hao Ku G, a member of the Graduate Christian Fellowship (GCF) leadership team and cocoordinator of the UCO with Shaw, who became Christian two years before coming to MIT, told *The Tech* that "As soon as I came here, one of my priorities was finding a Christian community on campus as well as a church I can call home."

At MIT. Ku noticed are not quick to judge based on religion, but instead are willing to ask questions like what are Christians like? What is Church like?

Finding a balance

Aull said he knows what it's like to balance religion with the academic load of MIT. As a graduate student, he says he had little concern about maintaining his faith. "I always felt that I could investigate reality for myself and not be swayed by peer pressure or other social or cultural influences"

In an email to *The Tech*, Mary A. Breton '14, President of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF), said, "It has certainly been difficult at MIT to maintain an active OCF group. Because we are a relatively small school and Orthodoxy is a relatively small religious group in the US and Canada (approximately 5 million people), yearly fluctuations dramatically affect membership."

Abid notices the effect that time constraints at MIT have on his role

with the MSA. "Although my faith has not been challenged at MIT, sometimes it has been difficult to balance administrative aspects of the MSA with study and research often times, it's hard to know how many events to organize before MSA members and volunteers are stretched too thin."

Ku observes that graduate students tend to have a relatively consistent schedule, which is beneficial when it comes to organizing religious activities.

Shaw says undergraduates have more inconsistent schedules. "With such variance, it becomes tricky at times to set things up," he said.

Fellowship

The UCO is a consortium of the Christian fellowships on campus, but is not an ASA-recognized student group. "We in UCO want to make sure that people are plugged in with an existing fellowship, and that UCO continues to function as the link among the fellowships, rather than becoming an entity on its own," Ku explained.

"Part of the reason it was founded was because it was recognized that students have limited amounts of time, so if all the different groups are really kind of fighting over the time of the students then it's not ideal," Shaw said, "We should work together, and recognize that we are different but working towards similar goals of making sure there is fellowship for each student."

"We encourage a fellowship to take initiative, and then we will support accordingly," Ku added. In recent years, the UCO has focused on communication between the leadership of each of the fellowships, but Shaw and Ku say they are looking for ways to get individual members of the fellowships working together,

This sense of congregation is important for a number of religious groups on campus. Members of the MSA gather for prayer in their Musalla, Islamic for "prayer room," which is partitioned for males and



Chinua Shaw '13 (left) and Mark Jen-Hao Ku G (right), coordinators of MIT's United Christian Organization (UCO), spoke with a **Tech** reporter last week. UCO is a joint effort between 11 Christian groups on campus, whose purposes include providing a place for Christian fellowship and unifying Christians on campus.

females in W11, the Religious Activities Center. This prayer space is where Muslims are encouraged to number of Muslims attending compulsory Friday noon prayer in W11 each week exceeds 200, although that often includes local Muslims in the Boston area, according to Abid.

"The MSA also has a dedicated chaplain who gives the Friday Sermons, conducts classes for intellectual exploration of Islam, and helps to organizes outreach efforts to promote understanding of Islam at MIT," Abid said.

Throughout the year, the MSA hosts speakers and services on both religious and secular themes, open to Muslims and non-Muslims, Abid said. "Perhaps the largest events the MSA organizes are our spring and fall dinners. These dinners attracted more than 250 people this year, and the fall dinner, was one of a series of MSA events in Islamic Awareness Month, with others including an Evening of Islamic Art and open Friday prayers."

Coming together

"Every week, we meet together for Family Home Evenings, a time set aside for families to draw closer

to God and each other. But we're in college, away from our families, so we have our own little group," perform their five daily prayers. The Colter said of the LDSSA. Sunday services and religious classes take place off campus at their church in Harvard Square. The group also hosts forums, barbecues, caroling, a babysitting night as a service to the married members of the group, and card-making days for Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day, where about 50 cards are made each semester by the MIT community.

"In my experience, there have been a few of us who regularly attend services at one of the Orthodox churches in Central Square and interact there," Breton said, "I am sure there are more Orthodox people at MIT, and next year I hope to encourage more involvement through Boston-wide OCF events, as most of our neighboring college campuses have OCFs as well."

Shaw says he appreciates getting together as a community with his BSF peers for bible studies. "The Bible is really a strong source for where we look for making a lot of types of decisions in our lives," he explained, "It allows for us to take a step back and look at the context of things going on in our lives."

14 THE TECH FRIDAY, M

RESULTS)M THE

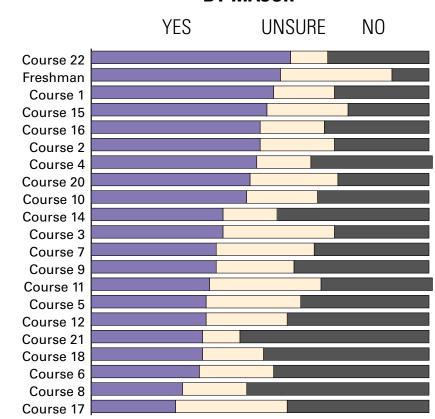
In an interview with The Tech, Chaplain to the Institute Robert M. Randolph said "If you want to see diversity at MIT you should look at the religious communities." Like any multidimensional topic, religion is a broad subject that cannot be adequately covered by a few simple questions. We relied on the US census for a list of religious affiliations, but even that doesn't offer a comprehensive list of all

the possible beliefs represented on this campus. We understand that this matter is not black and white — as will be the case in any survey, respondents are severely limited by the options in each question. We kept this in mind while evaluating all of our data and reading through your comments. Nevertheless, this special section of The Tech illustrates an important aspect of student life that is not often discussed over psets or meals at the dining halls.



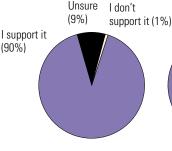
"Do you believe in god/higher power or deity?"

BY MAJOR



Religion and political issues

Stem cell research



I don't support it (67%)Unsure I support it

spondents support stem cell research. According to the data, those who say that religion has a strong influence on their views on stem cell research are more likely to not support it, while those who identified as not religious are much more likely to support stem cell research.

Overall, 75 percent of re-

NOT RELIGIOUS

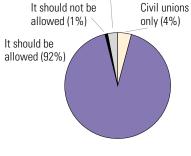
Unsure (3%)

RELIGION HAS NO INFLUENCE

RELIGION HAS SOME INFLUENCE

RELIGION HAS A STRONG INFLUENCE

Same-sex marriage



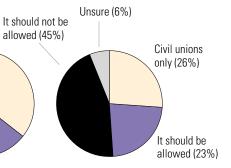
NOT RELIGIOUS

It's okay if

RELIGION HAS NO INFLUENCE



RELIGION HAS SOME INFLUENCE

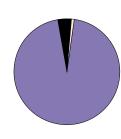


RELIGION HAS A STRONG INFLUENCE

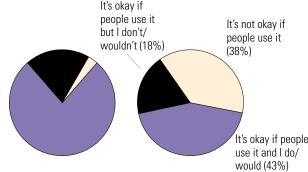
Those who identify as not religious are more likely to be supportive of same-sex marriage, while those who say that religion has a strong influence on their views on same-sex marriage are more likely to be against same-sex marriage or believe that civil unions should replace marriages for same-sex couples.

It's not okav if people use it people use it but I don't/ wouldn't (2%) It's okay if people use it and I do/ would (97%) Contraception

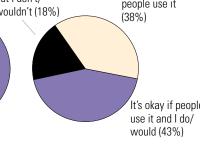
NOT RELIGIOUS



RELIGION HAS NO INFLUENCE



RELIGION HAS SOME INFLUENCE



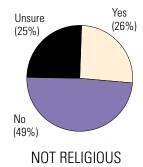
RELIGION HAS A STRONG INFLUENCE

Yes

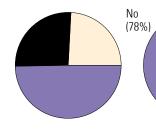
Unsure

When conditioning responses to questions on the use of contracention respondents were more likely to say they were OK with the use of contraception if they reported that religion had little influence on their views on contraception use.

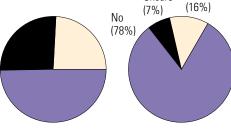
In favor of the death penalty



RELIGION HAS NO INFLUENCE



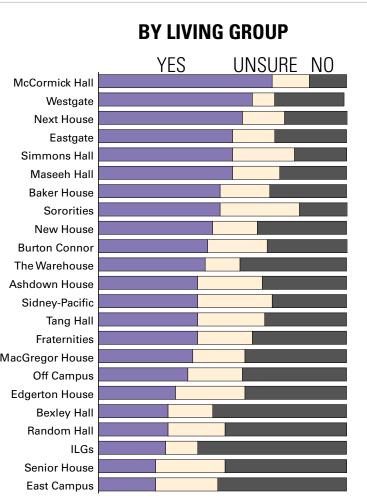
RELIGION HAS SOME INFLUENCE



RELIGION HAS A STRONG INFLUENCE

Across all respondents, 28 percent support the death penalty for a person convicted of aggravated murder. As indicated in the charts on the left, the more religion influenced respondents' views on the death penalty, the more likely they did not support the death penalty.

THE TECH 15



% of students believe in a higher power

38% do not. 22% are unsure.

32 % of students believe in an afterlife

42% do not. **25**% are unsure.

50% never pray 31% pray at least weekly

Religious affiliations

About a third of respondents say that they are Christian — of those, 36 percent are Catholic and 28 percent report no denomination. Atheists make up the largest single category, with 26 percent of respondents. Agnostics follow at 15 percent, while those reporting they subscribe to no religion making up 10 percent. These numbers are within a few percent of those reported in the 2011 MIT Enrolled Student Survey.

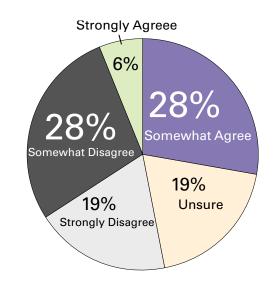
MIT RELIG	IOUS
AFFILIATI	ONS
CHRISTIAN	32 %
ATHEIST	26 %
AGNOSTIC	15 %
NO RELIGION	10%
JEWISH	6 %
HINDU	7 %
MUSLIM	2 %
BUDDHIST	2 %
OTHER	3%

CHRISTIAN DENOMINATI	
CATHOLIC	36%
NO DENOMINATION	28%
MORMON	5 %
BAPTIST	4%
LUTHERAN	4%
EASTERN ORTHODOX	4%
METHODIST	4%
EVANGELICAL	4%
OTHER	12%

Science and religion

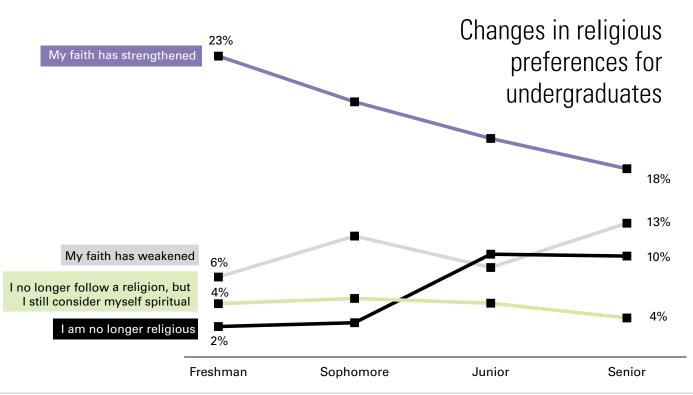
Science and religion are not mutually exclusive, but it can sometimes be difficult to reconcile certain spiritual theories with scientific data. Most interestingly, it was found that religious students at MIT tend to think that it is not difficult to reconcile the two whereas non-religious students do. This doesn't surprise philosophy Professor Alex Byrne, who sat down with The Tech for an interview. See page 13 for the article.

"Science is difficult to reconcile with religion"



Losing my religion

College is a formative time for religion. As students attempt to drink from the firehose of MIT, they realize something's got to give. Maybe they give up playing a sport, a musical instrument, or attending religious services. Or maybe, once they reach the age of 18, students face issues of life and death more and more frequently, and it shakes their faith in a higher power. Alternatively, students may find their faith strengthen as they're exposed to peers who share their beliefs or communities that become a home away from home for religious students.



What the heck is TGBSM?!

Corkboard confessions offers forum for religious discussion



Adam Reynolds '01 is on the leadership team for There's Gotta be Something More. TGBSM provides venues for discussions of faith and life for the MIT community.

> By Maggie Lloyd $CONTRIBUTING\ EDITOR$

Have you ever wondered where those "TGBSM" and "Corkfessions" posters came from?

The posters are a product of There's Gotta Be Something More (TGBSM), a group committed to encouraging deep, spiritual discussions on campus. "We think there might be something missing in terms of what's available in the spiritual and religious landscape of MIT," said Adam Reynolds '01, a member of TGBSM's leadership team.

At his graduation more than a decade ago, Reynolds says he felt "emotionally and spiritually bankrupt."

"When I graduated I kind of needed to recover from MIT," Reynolds said. "We're working so hard and are so focused and so dedicated that we don't have time to ask the deeper questions in life, like what makes my life meaningful and what is my purpose in life. You know, what do I consider to be a fulfilling life?'

In 2009, the pilot version of TG-BSM was launched, but the official kickoff took place this past fall. There are weekly discussions, which aren't tailored towards any particular religious faith, every Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in W11-155.

According to Reynolds, the events average 5-10 people each week, which is good for small, sometimes deep conversations.

Still, the total audience is pretty small. "We found ourselves having really good discussions in TGBSM; we also realized the reality is that most people are not going to come through our door in their time at MIT because everybody's busy."

Thus, the idea for Corkfessions was born. TGBSM wanted a way to encourage students to fit meaningful life conversations into their schedules.

"The way it works is we set up a (http://www.corkfessions. com), and it's just like a simple forum somewhat similar in format to http:// isawyou.mit.edu, and people can make anonymous posts and people can comment on other people's posts. Every week, we take a handful of those and turn them into physical posters that we put around campus," Reynolds

"We probably could have done a better job communicating how Corkfessions work," he said, "Because it seems like a lot of people had the idea that the statements on the posters were something that we were trying to say when in fact we don't even know who wrote those."

Looking to the future, TGBSM is hoping to become an ASA-recognized group and currently has an application pending.

Religion from the student center

How does the average MIT student perceive religion? Last week, The Tech talked to students having lunch in W20, and asked them about their thoughts on religion at MIT. How is religion viewed on campus? How and why do people's religious views get changed by MIT? Some found that their religious views deepened at college while others found that education made them question their previous beliefs. Ask a bunch of MIT students whether religion can be reconciled with science, and you are bound to get some interesting answers. Will you be surprised? For the full spectrum of views, see the interviews below.

–Jingyun Fan

Scott E. Sundvor, **Course 2, 2012**



What religion do you identify with? I don't identify with a religion.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

I think it depends on the religion. Some religious views are a lot stronger towards creationism and some allow scientific explanations, so it depends on which religion you associate with.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I think it should depend on the person. If someone is religious, they should be religious on campus, and if they aren't, then they shouldn't be. It seems to be right amount.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

I think there are more atheists on campus than I've noticed at home in Florida.

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

I have no idea.

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

I think they stayed about the same. If anything, even though now I don't believe in religion, but I don't believe science and God are disconnected.

Maria Cassidy, Course 1E, 2014

What religion do you identify with?

Nondenominational Christian

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

Yes, I've not really come across anything yet in my studies of the Bible and learning about evolution that can't be reconciled. Any scientific process could have been orchestrated or cre-

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

That's such a hard question because of the definition of religion. I think it should play a larger role on campus. I think a lot more people would be able to find comfort and hope in being at MIT because I know depression and a lot of times loneliness and a sense of jadedness can be really overwhelming, at least for me and my friends being part of a Christian community has really improved our lives so much. I haven't really been in other religious gatherings, but I hear they are really great. So it is probably the same for other religions as well.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

The most common view? It seems the most common view is that there is no God and that science wins and rules. That would be my assumption.

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between

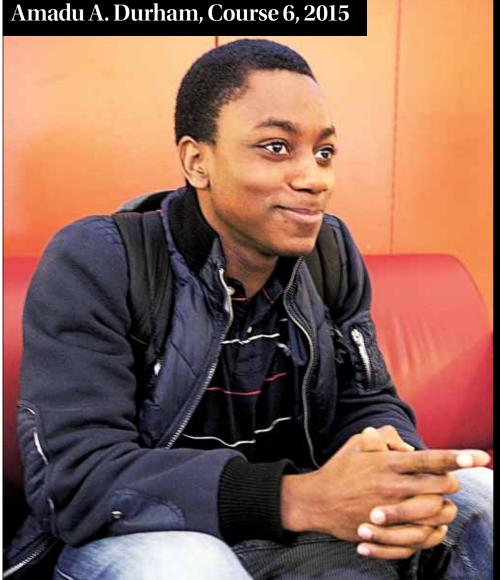
I definitely don't think there is a difference between the courses. ... I don't see really any different religious culture in dorms. Other types of culture, but not religions.



Do you think there is there a difference in religious views between genders?

How have your religious views changed after you came to

My faith has definitely grown a lot. I've been a part of really great groups like Cross Products and United Baptists, and working with like minds and intelligent people and studying the Bible and thinking "wait this doesn't make sense, let's examine the history and the though process." My understanding has definitely improved, and hasn't deterred my belief and also just the fact that MIT is so hard, and I'm really prone to loneliness and jadedness, and a sense that no one is particularly caring about me, but I know that God is caring about me. Being able to keep my life convenient and going to church on campus and finding a really strong Christian community on campus has been my way of getting everything under control emotionally. Yeah, it's been awesome.



What religion do you identify with?

No religion.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

No, only because I see religion as certain guidelines that you have to follow. I don't think it should be combined with science.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

ally be larger or smaller. Only because we're at an engineering school, where the focus is on science and engineering, so religion would skew purposes.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

I would say probably no religion. I think a lot of people are so scientific, they don't think too much about faith or anything like that.

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

I think it is more individual and private than dorms.

How have your religious views changed after you came to

Not really, I don't think MIT has had any effect on my religious views.

David C. Christoff, Course 2, 2014

What religion do you identify with?

I'm not religious.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

To an extent, so long as it is in the spiritual realm and not in the physical realm.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I think it should play a smaller role. I don't like seeing people out at 77 shouting at me about religion. It would be nice to walk around without that in my face.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

I think most students aren't very religious, but there are some very fervent exceptions.

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

I lived in New House my freshman year, and there were more

religious students there than I've seen anywhere else. I don't think there is a difference between

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

They haven't.



Orevaoghene (Reva) S. Attah, Courses 10 and 14, 2015

What religion do you identify with?

Anglican Christian.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

No, it goes back to how atheists view the world contrasted with how Christians see the world.

So why are you at MIT?

I'm trying to get an education and give back to my country.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I'm falling behind on my religion since I came. Honestly, I haven't gone to church since I came and I don't read my Bible enough because there is so much work. The problem is that there is no time.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

I don't think that anybody can say, because there are so many different types of people. It is so diverse, there is no typical MIT student. I think a lot of people are open minded, I know a lot of people in the Muslim Students Asso-



ciation and a lot of Christians.

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

I don't know.

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

They have not changed one bit. I am still Christian; I believe in



Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

I do. I think that a lot of people are irreconcilable, but there are a lot of ways to. ...people like to put things in a box, but there are a lot of ways to make everything fit together.

Mary A. Breton, Course 3, 2014

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I think MIT is very unique that we have a lot of people who are very into the science. I think religion is very personal, and doesn't necessarily need to be pushed. I think a lot of people are very skeptical, and all we can do is encourage what we know and let people make their own decisions.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

think a lot of people are anti-religion, although I'm

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

I think dorms attract different people so it makes sense that different dorms would attract different kinds of people, but I'm not really sure if there actually is a pattern.

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

I think it has strengthened because it is one thing to go to church because your family goes to church, and it's another thing to get up on a Sunday morning and go to church when you have a million other things to do, when you've partied the night before and you don't really want to get up. I've been involved in a few Christian groups on campus and it has helped me understand that even though a lot of people don't share my views, there are also a lot of people who do.

Lilian L. Guevara, Course 2, 2014

What religion do you identify with? Baptist Christian.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?



So why are you at MIT then?

I'm not here for religion. I don't really care about religion like that.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I think it should be a smaller role, because here we have so much diversity. There are a lot of religions, and it's good to avoid any controversy.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

I think... I'm not sure... there are small groups of very religious people, but I don't know many people who are very religious.

Do you think there is a difference in religious views between dorms is? Between courses?

No. I don't think so.

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

I think I've become more religious, just because I missed my family. And my mom is really religious, so that inspired me to get more into it

John-Ross Andrews, Course 2A, 2012

What religion do you identify with?

Agnostic.

Atheist.

Do you think that religion can be reconciled with science?

No I don't think so.

Do you think religion should play a larger or smaller role on the MIT campus?

I believe religion adds conflict, and to avoid conflict it should play a smaller role on campus.

What do you think the religious view of the typical MIT student is?

What do you think the difference in religious views between dorms is? Between

No, I think you can get a wide variety in every dorm.

What about between genders



Most boys don't go to church, I don't know what to say.

How have your religious views changed after you came to MIT?

I was a devout Roman Catholic before, and now I'm agnostic.

What happened?

Time, stress, and science.

18 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012

COMMENTS FROM THE SURVEY

By Jessica Pourian

At the end of the survey, students were invited to write about their thoughts and experiences with religion at MIT. We selected the best comments and stories from the survey to fill this page. To publish all the comments would require several pages in an issue of *The Tech*, so these responses represent just a small sample of the nearly 400 answers we received.

Responses ranged from concerns about the religion survey itself, to stories about religious discrimination at the Institute, and thoughts about how MIT can improve its spiritual life. Opinions varied drastically for every topic; we had feedback from the most militant of atheists to the most devout theists about the state of

religion at the Institute.

Students described situations of being told to believe in God while sitting in the fourth floor of the student center, or of being harshly rebuked by friends for trying to invite them to a religious service. Several comments bemoaned the absence of a sense of religiousness on campus — chastising MIT for depriving students of a chance for spiritual growth ("MIT does a terrible job nurturing this essential aspect of our life," one respondent wrote, "and thereby does a great disservice to MIT students.") Others decried that religion existed at MIT at all.

We tried to capture the essence of the community's feedback in these comments. Read on for more!

When you die you rot.

I think that people who are super religious and attend MIT have to deal with their contradictions everyday. I feel bad for them until they start telling me I am going to hell.

There is no forcing of religion onto anyone that I've seen since being here. That is a vast improvement from everywhere else I've lived

Religion is annoying. People are cranky when they're fasting. I have absolutely no problem with anyone believing in Santa Claus, Zeus, unicorns, dragons, God, or any other fairy tales they would like, so long as such views do not discourage open minded, critical thinking, impede the progress of scientific understanding, and promote hatred and bigotry towards others.

I don't think it is difficult to reconcile science with religion, but I do think it is difficult to reconcile scientists with religious people sometimes. People here are pretty open-minded

I have occasionally been excluded by Catholic PI's during fieldwork from scientific discussions because I refused to pray beforehand. I feel that religious discrimination still occurs in New England and that it should not impact how we work. I find people that try to impose their spiritual decisions on me to be rude and unsavory. I would prefer that none of my student activity fees be given to any religious group because these people have treated me so poorly in the past.

Being at MIT has made me more religiously tolerant.

When I was younger, I believed very strongly in the existence of God, and this was the cause of a lot of pain in my life at that time. I suffer from OCD and depression, and starting from the age of ~5, I was terrified of performing a "sin". I remember spending hours praying at night in secret, asking God for forgiveness for various intrusive thoughts. By the time I was 8, I'd concluded that I was damned to go to hell as a sinner, and only prayed to God to forgive my family and not punish them for my "sins" (telling white lies, cursing, being resentful of others at times). Needless to say, I was lonely and afraid most of the time as a child, and suicidal by middle school. My experience with "God" was not a happy one, and I do not find the idea of my thoughts and actions being watched by a higher power to be comforting in the least. I am currently fighting my OCD and depression with atheism and antidepressants, and I've learned not to tell my religious friends about my mental illnesses. I don't have a problem with people having different opinions and beliefs from me, and I think it's great that people can find comfort in something. However, whenever people tell me that I wouldn't need medication if I learned to believe God's grace, I want to punch through a window. TL;DR — religion, your mileage may vary.

MIT is downright hostile towards religion. People here I so very close minded to the supernatural that they are even more irrationally against religion than religious people are against naturalism. They believe naturalism with more blind faith than any other religion believes in their God. I have been sworn at, insulted, had my beliefs insulted, yelled at, shoved aside and had backs turned on me for inviting people to religious events when a simple "no" would have sufficed.

I love the diversity embraced by MIT

At MIT, I found a rich and friendly religious community that guided and welcomed me upon my decision to convert to a different faith. I had not been religious before matriculating, and my classmates helped me to enrich my life in this way.

I am disappointed with how religious MIT is. Nearly everyone in my living group is religious. I would think that of all places, MIT would have students that realize religion is ridiculous and goes against the goal of science. How can a scientist, who questions everything, accept extraordinary claims without any evidence on the basis of pure faith? It's incredibly hypocritical.

The stresses and pressures at MIT have at times made me wish that I were more religious. It would be nice to draw strength from something other than myself sometimes.

I avoid mentioning my faith to because I know they will see it as a sign of my lack of intelligence. While they (might) not be so rude as to express it to my face, I know it would change their opinion of me for the worse.

I find fuller meaning and joy in my research and studies appreciating it as a God-given opportunity to peek at His amazing wisdom and beauty; seeing good ideas and sparks of insight during my research makes me more in awe of God. Research, study, and teaching are great ways of worshiping God.

I find that MIT is largely split on this issue, where there are fiercely religious people, and fiercely atheist people, and when you are religious but it doesn't inform every facet of your life, it's almost like you're doing it wrong in the eyes of both groups and it can be very isolating. The religious don't want you because you aren't religious enough, or they want you a lot and want you to be more religious, and the atheists want you to renounce religion all together. I will add the caveat that there are a large number of religious people that will offer for you to come to church with them, but will not pressure you if you choose not to join.

Can science be reconciled with religion?

Religion and science complement each other; they address separate questions

By Ryan Normandin

STAFF COLUMNIST

Asking whether or not religion conflicts with science is too broad a question. Of course there are certain religions that conflict with science; Christian fundamentalism, with its claims of God creating the world in six days and the human race springing from a woman tempted by a talking snake, obviously conflicts with well-established science. Yet there are many other religions which do not conflict with science. As a Catholic. I have not once encountered a belief held by the Church that contradicts anything that I have learned during my time in high school or time here as a physics major at MIT.

Some might find this surprising; I was once chatting with a friend who told me that she could never be Catholic because she "believed in evolution." The Catholic Church subscribes to the theory of evolution, as do most Jews and some sects of Islam. One of the most common reasons individuals believe that science and a given religion conflict is that they have misunderstood the beliefs of that religion. This makes sense. as many popular movies and television shows have portrayed all Christians, regardless of sect, as ignorant biblethumpers who believe that people rode dinosaurs.

The Catholic Church subscribes to the theory of evolution, as do most Jews.

Of course these are caricatures, and obviously not representative, but when it's all people have to go off of, they may assume that it is at least a first-order approximation of what Christians really believe. As such, I encourage individuals to gain a more complete understanding of what different religious beliefs actually entail before assuming that, by nature of being religious, religion conflicts with science.

Thus the question posed in the first paragraph is trivial: it depends on which religion you're referring to. The more interesting and nuanced question is whether having any belief system which can be neither confirmed nor refuted by science is inherently in conflict with the scientific method and the body of knowledge we've amassed. The answer to this question, as you will see, is that having such a belief system is not a necessary and sufficient condition for being in conflict with science.

Let me first point out that religion and science have many similarities. Unless God pops down from Heaven to kindly prove his existence for us, religious beliefs cannot be proven to be true; they are taken on faith. Some scientists may find this laughable, but science has the identical

characteristic, which is also its greatest strength. By and large, scientific theories can never be proven to be correct. Evidence can be gathered in support of it, but we can never know with 100 percent certainty if gravity actually works the way we think. Sure, general relativity describes it well, but as so many professors emphasize here, our scientific theories are models. We continuously refine those models as new information comes to light. Less commonly known is that religions do the same thing. The beliefs of a religion are re-examined and refined as time passes and new knowledge is attained. In fact, some religions, such as Catholicism, gather groups of its members periodically for that explicit purpose.

Science is concerned with describing and predicting the universe; religion with explaining it.

While both disciplines gather evidence, it might be argued by some that the evidence in science is a lot more solid than that in religion. After all, science has the ability to measure things quantitatively, but religion cannot measure how much of the "God Field" is manifest in a church. Even so, religions have also gathered evidence; it's just a different kind, taking the form of texts, claims of miracles, and other personal evidence. Some find that evidence compelling enough to form a belief, others do not. Is that so different from science? Today, we have extensive measurements of gravity, but everyone disagrees on what gravity is. Recent research suggests it might be an entropic force while others support the "brane theory" of gravity. Quantum mechanics, a field that dates back to the early 1900s, is still argued about today. Does the wave function actually collapse, or are there an infinite number of universes, one for each possible state as Many-Worlds claims? It is not the evidence in science or religion that is in question it's what people make of it. It's the interpretations that split them into Jews and Muslims, or subscribers to the Copenhagen Interpretation and believers of the Many-Worlds hypothesis. Each interpretation of the religious evidence throughout history that has spurned the creation of so many different sets of beliefs is a unique faith. Similarly, each interpretation of quantum mechanics is nothing more, and nothing less, than a faith.

What of so-called "miracles"? Many religions use such events as evidence to support religious claims, yet walking on water is not supported by science. But science has not presented any evidence in direct conflict to the claim that an all-powerful being could not change the rules locally or utilize some force that we do not yet understand to perform the miracle. This is in

important contrast to claims that are held onto despite being in direct conflict with science and capable of being proved impossible, such as the creation of the world a few thousand years ago. Miracles are an example of one of the elements of religion that science has nothing to say about, just like religion has nothing to say about general relativity. Science is apathetic to whether or not a supreme being could bend the laws of physics locally and religion is apathetic to whether or not general relativity is the best description of gravity.

A final argument that might be made by those who believe that science and religion conflict under the nuanced definition I provided in the beginning would be that, as religion lacks certain aspects of the scientific method, it does not hold the same weight as science. Yet this claim is based on the assumption that the scientific method is in some way superior to the "religious method," which I will define as gathering evidence, reflecting personally, and developing an interpretation of that evidence. The scientific method is as superior to the religious method as a recipe for cookies is to one for brownies; they have two completely different goals, which will of course have different methodologies. It just doesn't make sense to apply the same process to both fields. The religious method is relatively useless in science, and the scientific method is relatively useless in religion. As Einstein said, "If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it's stupid." So let's judge each of these fields by the distinct criteria that apply

Science is apathetic to whether a supreme being could bend the laws of physics.

Religion and science do not contradict each other. They are both systems which produce theories that some people will have faith in albeit different methodologies. Science is concerned with describing and predicting the universe; religion is concerned with explaining it. Believing in some religion is not inherently a sufficient condition to be in conflict with science. Only when religion makes claims that are obviously refutable by well-established scientific evidence is it ever in conflict with science, but that's the trivial, uninteresting case. In fact, many believe that science and religion complement each other well. Each covers one domain and largely stays out of the other; when you put them together, you have a solid "Theory of Everything." No one can say with certainty whether or not a God exists; as long as science cannot disprove the possibility, the two disciplines will continue to complement each other well.

History is clear: religion slows science and understanding

By Haldun Anil STAFF COLUMNIST

The Tech's religion survey covered a range of questions about the religious views of MIT students; everything from "How religious are you?" to "How religious is MIT?" and "Is religion difficult to reconcile with science?" Good questions all, but it is the last that is the most interesting.

When asked to rate their own level of religious belief, 43 percent of undergraduates said they were completely not religious.

Let's get a baseline from the numbers. When asked to rate their own level of religious belief, on a scale from 1 (not religious) to 10 (very religious), 43 percent of undergraduates picked 1, saying they were completely not religious. Only seven percent chose 10, saying they very devoted to their religious beliefs. However, when asked what they thought of the religious views of all of campus, only four percent chose 1, while less than one percent chose 10.

Students were also asked to respond to rate their agreement with the statement "it is difficult to reconcile science with religion", with the option to strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, or say that they were unsure. Responses were evenly divided: 48 percent of undergraduates said they at least disagreed, while 44 percent agreed it was difficult to reconcile science and religion.

I side with the latter camp. While I consider myself unreligious, I have nothing but respect for those who, on a personal level, sincerely care for their beliefs and wish to uphold them. And yet, history has shown us time and again that when you mix religion with science, you obtain results far from optimal.

Examples from history of how religious institutions slowed the progress of science abound sometimes acting as an impediment, other times halting it entirely. One need only remember the condemnation the Catholic Church issued upon Galileo and Copernicus, whose work on the motion of the planets was seen to challenge biblical passages, such as Psalms 104:5: "He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved"

Of course, we do not live in 16th century Europe, so it is tempting to think that such examples no longer hold; that our cultures would continuously improve. Unfortunately, even today we see signs of undue religious influence on scientific advances.

I can speak from personal experience from my time in Turkey. During my junior year of high school, my biology class, which had genetics as part of the curriculum, also included a brief presentation of ideas posited by Charles Darwin. My successors will not see that — starting this year, Charles Darwin has been removed from the curriculum. Turkey's Ministry of Education, part of a government that has taken a liking to calling itself "Moderately Islamic," issued that edict.

Evolution, as proven by science, is not a thing we can choose to believe in or not. It is not a question of faith or devotion. Evolution is a naturally occurring cycle that will continue to happen despite what is written in scripture. This is where the fundamental issue between science and religion poses itself.

In the past, the quest to give meaning to some of the universe's unexplained phenomena through religion was acceptable as our knowledge of how we got here was severely limited and we craved for meaning. Today, while there still is a lot to discover, our knowledge of the mechanics of evolution and cosmology allows us to respond to many questions that we were unable to answer in the past. As we learn more and get better at answering the big questions, science asserts itself as the dominant way of doing so. However, when the answers we get conflict with the teachings of religion, we find ourselves at an impasse. Because neither side will ever be willing to give in, the reconciliation of science with religion becomes impossible. At this point, the impasse quickly turns into a game with a single rule: the one who can assert superiority in its claim against the other wins.

Throughout history, religion has proven itself ready to block scientific advancement if it meant undermining of its own teachings. While this says nothing about the personal virtues and benefits of religion, religious institutions have always had more pragmatic approaches to science. From what I've seen, religious teachings don't push one to think analytically, to challenge ideas, and to incite progress. It is instead the personal qualities of those who, despite being compliant with their faith, come up with novel and earthshattering ideas to transform the world and our understanding of everything that surrounds us. This can only be achieved by education, critical thinking, and knowledge, qualities that our Institute embodies. The effect of the four years that students spend at MIT demonstrates that: while two percent of freshmen admit to no longer being religious since their arrival at MIT, this number climbs to three percent for sophomores, jumps to eight percent for juniors, and leaps again to 10 percent for

We cannot choose to ignore evolution, as proven by science; it will occur regardless of what scripture says. Evolution is not a question of faith or devotion.

Science is discovery, inventions, analysis, challenge, and knowledge. Religion is spirituality, morality, personal virtues, and lifestyles. Reconciling one with the other is a futile attempt as the two do not overlap, but define different domains in one's life. I am certain that the benefits of religion are innumerable to those who practice them; however, the fact remains that religion is a personal experience that will exist so long as people have need for it. Science, on the other hand, is not a matter of belief; it is a matter of **Heavenly voices**

Three a capella groups have strong ties to the religious community

By Deena Wang

CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

Gospel Choir

Gospel Choir is one of MIT's Christianity-based music singing groups. Founded over 35 years ago, their 30-some members come from a a variety of Christian backgrounds. The group provides an opportunity to practice while they preach, with prayer and scripture readings during rehearsals.

"Gospel Choir is not just a singing group. We're a family who is also deeply in love with Jesus Christ," said Chelsie W. Librun '13, "It's not uncommon for us to break out of our official list of songs, whether it's during our concert or during our practices, just because we love just singing to

One of Gospel Choir's premiere events is Gospel Fest, a gathering of several Boston-area collegiate gospel music groups. Although the event doesn't always go off without a hitch, it still provides an opportunity for the group to grow closer.

"Last year, ... our director quit on us a few days before [Gospel Fest], so we not only didn't have a director, but we had no band as well," recalled Joy S. Ekuta '13, "Everyone came together to have extra rehearsals, find some of our friends to be the band, and we had a better concert run as

a family out of love, free to the community to enjoy."

Techiya

Techiya is an MIT a capella group devoted to Jewish, Hebrew, and Israeli music. Although most of the music they perform is in Hebrew, Techiya's repertoire includes a wide variety of styles. According to assistant music director Mauro Braunstein G, their current songs include "a very popular song from 1920's-ish Yiddish theater ... a pre-Renaissance Sephardic love song in Ladino ... [and] a modern Israeli pop song in Hebrew."

The group has strong connections to the Jewish community; they sing at temples, Hillel's Shabbat dinners, and the annual Test Tube Menorah Lighting. They also include non-Jewish members.

"I was raised without any religious influences, so I was always indifferent to religion and didn't understand why people would choose to spend so much time participating in religious activities," said Techiya President Jessica M. Noss '14, "However, many of my closest friends now are Jewish grad students, so last semester I started attending their Shabbat dinners and Hillel-sponsored social events. I've discovered that religion is not as simple as 'believing or not believing'; it's something that brings people together through shared customs, and - at least in my experience with Judaism it doesn't even matter whether people believe."

Cross Products

The Cross Products are a multidenominational Christian a capella group founded in 1988. The 17 member team is devoted to spreading the word of Jesus Christ through music; they perform around MIT and elsewhere. The most memorable concerts for Yusung "John" Lim '12 are "the performances that we do during our spring breaks. This year, we went to Pittsburgh and sang at a Christian homeless shelter that gives men a place to stay as they get back up on their feet. More than just the singing, it was amazing to get to talk to the men and for both parties to share the grace that we've been given and see how our faith has changed our lives."

The group also has strong ties to the greater Christian community. "We are a part of the United Christian Organization (UCO) so we are connected to a large part of the Christian community on campus," Lim said, "In addition, many of our members are involved in Christian fellowships. Part of our ministry as the Cross Products is to run sound for the other a cappella groups and other events such as the UCO Praise Night and Registration Day Services."



The Cross Products are an a capella Christian singing group at MIT.



PHOTO COURTESY OF IESSICA NOS

Techiya is MIT's Jewish, Hebrew, and Israeli a capella singing

MIT Gospel Choir is a co-ed gospel singing group here at MIT that exists to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Enjoy life: skip the latter half of The Atheist's Guide

A catchy title and a few thought provoking pages aside, the book is a snoozefest

By Roberto Perez-Franco

STAFF WRITER

The advice not to judge a book by its cover proves wise in the case of Alex Rosenberg's latest tome. A fetching title and subtitle, which seem to fly out of the page from a Big-Bangish burst of white over the background of a colorful deep-space image, promise hours of thoughtful and imaginative reading about how freethinkers can enjoy life without resort to nonsense. It's a beautiful, exciting cover, for what turns out to be a rather dull and overall underwhelming book. The book starts strong, by boldly stating its goal, namely answering the "unavoidable questions" in life. It also demarcates its audience: "This is a book for atheists," we are told, for "people who are comfortable with the truth about reality." It is certainly not for "people who believe in religion," not even for "just doubters and agnostics" that are still undecided. No. It's solely for those who "have moved past that point" and know for certain that "belief in God is on par with belief

Sounds like a book for me! I thought. "If science made you an atheist" — it did, it did! "you are already as strongly committed to the serious scientific answers to the unavoidable questions as you are to atheism" — I am, I am! For Rosenberg, science and atheism seem to be entangled as quasi-synonyms in a synergistic embrace. Along with atheism, we are told, comes science as a worldview with a "demanding, rigorous, breathtaking grip on reality, one that has been vindicated beyond reasonable doubt." And vice versa: an "unblinking scientific worldview requires atheism." Atheism can claim as part of its worldview the answers that science has found

to the "persistent questions" in life. "From the nature of reality uncovered by science, consequences follow. This book is about those consequences." Wow!

At this point, with the crossbow of suspense stretched to its maximum, I'm hooked: I'm the audience for this book, and it is about to reveal to me the answers that science, that ultimate tool for knowledge generation, can provide about the eternal questions to all those that have cleansed their minds of religious superstition. Chapter one, since its early pages, presents a machine-gun-like summary of the key questions and their answers in a nutshell: There is no God, the nature of reality is what physics says it is, the universe has no purpose, life has no meaning, we exist due to dumb luck, prayer does not work, there is no soul, no free will and no afterlife, there is no moral difference between right and wrong ("anything goes"), love is an evolutionary trick, history is bunk and humans can't learn from it. So far so good.

Yet I can only wish the book had stopped here, since the rest of it is a snoozefest that only detracts from the excitement the author built in the opening pages. Reiterating that Newtonian physics precludes an ulterior purpose in heavenly mechanics (chapter two) or that Darwinian evolution can produce complex life forms without a designer (chapters three and four) is preaching to the choir if the audience is, as stated in the preface, composed of thinkers that became atheists through science. The 52-page discussion on how there is no true good and evil since physical reality has no moral preference could be summarized by Mad Men's Don Draper: "The universe is indifferent." After that, things start going downhill at an even steeper slope: don't

trust your "deceiving conscious" (chapter seven), the physical Paris and the act of thinking of Paris are unrelated (chapter eight), introspection is an illusion and you have no free will (chapters nine and 10), knowledge about history cannot lead to progress (chapter 11) and you should learn to stop worrying and love Prozac (chapter 12).

The only passage that really tickled my intellect lies between pages 102 and 113, where the author argues that evolution provided humanity with a core morality, composed of pretty benign principles that on the long run would benefit its survival. Sample principles are "don't cause gratuitous pain to a newborn baby, especially your own" and "protect your children." The principles in this core morality are so obvious that "no one has ever bothered to formulate" them. In addition, are factual beliefs, correct or incorrect, which change from one group to another.

An example of a factual belief of West African Muslims, we are told, is that "some genital cutting makes [girls] attractive to potential future husbands; some sewing up protects them from rape." When core morality combines with the factual beliefs of a group, it produces the local moral system we see in that group. The examples of how harmless principles of core morality can combine with incorrect factual beliefs to produce morally controversial practices, such as female genital cutting, are mind-opening. The author argues convincingly that the disagreement on these moral issues is "a disagreement about factual beliefs, not core morality." If only the rest of the book was this enlightening! But it is not.

Rosenberg's book sets for itself a list of objectives so high that it was all but doomed to fail from the start. However, it did not have to

★★★☆☆

The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life Without Illusions

By Alex Rosenberg W.W. Norton

2011

fail in such a boring manner. The endless repetition of ideas, the gratuitous complication of simple arguments, and an abundance of circular references involving atheism and science feeding on each other (not unlike Melville's frenzied sharks repeatedly eating their own guts), makes the reading of this volume something akin to torture.

I reject the author's claim that scientific knowledge cannot be put into stories, whereas religion can. As evidence I submit the ever taller pile of fascinating popular science books that are published every year. But I do embrace his call to live life without illusions or fear, with the caveat that even that point was made in a protracted manner. The same idea was better said — again — by Don Draper, when as an answer to Roger Sterling's question of "What else is there?". he quipped: "I don't know. Life being lived? I'd like to stop talking about it and get back to it." After suffering through the 350 pages of Rosenberg's zigzagging philosophical treaty, so do I.

Friday, May 11, 2012

Maseeh lecture series merges arts and sciences

Events include a Master's Tea, science lecture, and a proposed public art exhibition

Maseeh, from Page 1

reer experiences."

"As a dancer myself, I felt like this was something I would be interested in pursuing sometime. ... It was interesting to realize how creative people can be and what they can do to connect with others," added Larissa J. Senatus '15.

"Lots of Maseeh students, it turns out, are dancers at MIT, and I think everyone enjoyed John's creative work connecting dance to science," said Eli Kintisch, who organized Expressions. Kintisch is a Knight Science Journalism Fellow at MIT and Maseeh's Resident Scholar.

The second event in the series was Maggie Koerth-Baker's lecture "Shedding Light, Online," held on April 4. Koerth-Baker, a science editor for the popular blogging site BoingBoing.net, spoke about how blogging and interacting with a responsive audience shaped her new book on the future of American energy, Before the Lights Go Out.

The last event was an art reception — "To Extremes: Public Art in a Changing World." To Extremes was a juried exhibition of proposed public

artworks exploring climate change. The jury consisted of nine professional artists and designers. Attended by around 90 people, this exhibit was on display in Maseeh's lobby from April 20 to April 29. London-based artist Sam Jury won the first place of \$2,500 for further development of the proposed project for installation at a public site.

Effects on Maseeh Culture

"We believe that Maseeh Hall should be host to visitors to explore new and interesting cultural, academic, and scientific ideas," said Kintisch. He hopes themes like art, dance, creativity, and scientists and engineers engaging with the world will be part of the Maseeh culture in the future.

"I think it would be great if Maseeh students could come together and decide what sorts of speakers they would be most interested in, and then we would all work together to invite different people and plan exciting events like this one," suggested Villa.

Some students, though, express lower expectations for the program. Though Peña supports the idea of

having more of such lectures at Maseeh, he said that these talks are not big enough to have an influence on the dorm's culture.

"I don't think the Expressions talks can become that popular given that they are limited to a single residential hall whose culture has no particular attraction to the arts," said Peña

"I don't know how popular it was, considering it was the first time it happened at Maseeh," noted Senatus, "but I do think they could become very popular if proper advertisement is made in advance."

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22 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012

MacG not yet filled for summer housing

There is good news for those on the summer housing waitlist. 77 people, mostly from MacGregor, have declined their given housing as of Wednesday. The bad news is that the waitlist only includes students who did not get into Senior House, Bexley, or Random, but don't want MacGregor, according to director of housing Dennis J. Collins.

Of the four dorms open for summer housing — MacGregor, Random, Bexley, and Senior House — MacGregor is the only dorm with open space. Random and Bexley are filled to capacity while Senior House is filled to half capacity to leave room for kitchen renovations. The 73 residents living in Senior House will only have one kitchen open during the summer while the rest are being redesigned. Collins said that the dorms open for the summer were selected because of their amenities: Senior House is cat-, smoking-, and handicap-friendly; Bexley is cat- and smoking-friendly; and Random is cat-friendly. All four dorms are cook-for-yourself, meaning they come equipped with full, communal kitchens on each floor. The combined capacity of the dorms is about 530 students.

If MacGregor is not filled to capacity, summer residents will fill in entry by entry, so unused sections can be closed. The final lottery to fill in people from the waitlist will take place on May 14.

Derek Chang contributed reporting.



MIT students surveyed a wide range of overseas opportunities at Monday's Interna-

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tional Development Career Fair on Monday.

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for the display industry. DisplayWeek is the best place to demonstrate advanced display technology, and publicize the value for licensing, selling or funding your technology. Be there when the puck drops June 3 - 8, 2012, at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. To exhibit or for more event information, visit: http://www.displayweek.org

INNOVATION ZONE "I-Zone"

New at Display Week 2012, the I-Zone will give attendees a glimpse of cutting-edge live demonstrations and prototypes of the display products of tomorrow. Researchers from companies, startups, univer sities, government labs, and independent research labs will demonstrate their prototypes or other hardware demo units for two days in a dedicated space in the main Exhibit Hall. The "Best Prototype at Display Week," to be selected by the I-Zone Committee, will be announced in Information Display magazine.

Is Schrödinger's cat dead?

The Tech sits down with student composer Dustin R. Katzin '12 after the MITSO premiere of his physics-inspired piece

By Bogdan Fedeles

STAFF WRITER

Dustin R. Katzin '12 is a quintessential MIT renaissance scholar, whose impressively diverse achievements are a testament to the remarkable breadth of MIT education and simultaneously set stratospheric standards for the rest of us. A scientist and artist in one, in the four short years of college, Dustin has managed not only to complete a double major in physics and mathematics, dazzle his peers with musical artistry and stay involved in myriad other extracurriculars, but also to have fun while doing it. His crowning artistic achievement is Schrödinger's Cat: a Musical Journey into the Strange World of Quantum Mechanics, a programmatic orchestral work that was premiered by MITSO last Friday. I sat down with Dustin to talk about music and life at

The Tech: Now that you're graduating, how would you rate your overall MIT experience and what are your favorite moments?

Dustin Katzin: This was definitely the perfect place for me because they specialize towards math and physics and science in general. As for favorite moments, the concert from Friday is definitely up there.

TT: Any particular classes that you

'I've been exploring ways in which physics can influence music and serve as an inspiration for music.

DK: I really enjoyed a lot of the physics classes, general relativity, the whole quantum sequence. Actually, it was really funny

- at the end of the last quantum class 8.04, they hacked the last lecture. ... They made one of the lecturer's seats into a throne, it was like getting the whole MIT experience.

TT: Speaking of physics, what do physics and music have in common? Which one

DK: Well, the Big Bang happened. So I think physics came first, and if you want to analyze the waves, music fundamentally is physics. The thing that's interesting about that is that your ear can decompose sound waves so when you listen you can pick out the trumpet and the strings. That's called Fourier analysis. And you're doing that before you can add, so you're already doing calculus, which is pretty awesome! There's the flip side where I've been exploring

play. This seemed very complicated. I'm not really sure how the idea formed, but the motivation was that I liked the idea of randomness. Again, the point of music for me is not to be esoteric that you have to decode it but pretty apparent as you're hearing it. The original idea was the coin flip. Schrödinger's Cat, coin flip, lives or dies, that was the idea. I was: "Wow, I have to do this." I was floored the whole day. I started putting down some initial notes. The cat has to be in the box and I had two motifs that I wanted to mix together. But how did the cat get in the box in the first place? It's going to be a dramatic piece, so let's have a chase sequence. I didn't know it was going to be Heisenberg kidnapping the cat until a

'The original idea was the coin flip. Schrödinger's lacktriangle cat, coin flip, lives or dies, that was the idea.'

ways in which physics can influence music and serve as an inspiration for music. There's definitely also a big mathematical component in terms of what sounds good and what doesn't; it comes from combinations of chords and adding up frequencies. There's a class here where you use matrices and other mathematical tools to guide your composition, but I've found that the more math you add in artificially, the worse it sounds. To me, fundamentally, music has to sound good.

TT: Let's talk about your piece Schrödinger's Cat. How did this piece come about? Where did you get the idea about writing a piece about quantum physics?

DK: I took a class on 20th century composition and on the last day in lecture we listened to music from the early 20th century all the way to now; some of it had random elements like using dart board and throwing darts to decide which note to

TT: How did you come up with the instruments for the main theme - English horn for the cat and bass clarinet for Heisenberg?

DK: Heisenberg first was on tuba. One of the difficulties about composing now is that most of it is done on the computer so it sounds a lot different [than in real life]. It sounded really nice on the computer, but I didn't realize how loud the tuba actually is. Towards the later stages I met with the composers on staff here and we talked about ways to flesh out the ideas that I had, which included moving that theme to the bass clarinet, which works well for this cartoon depiction of Heisenberg. As for the cat on the English horn, that wasn't the original way that motif started. The very first music I had was the beginning of "the cat lives" - the happy ending — with all the strings playing. Then I decided that should also open the piece, to establish that the happy

music is the cat.

TT: How long did it take to get to the final version?

DK: It depends what you mean by a final version. There still isn't a final version. There were some changes we had to put in by hand along the way. The idea came in December of 2009, so the whole process has been about 2.5 years from start to finish. The concert was a really good cap to this.

TT: Was the coin flip real in the concert? DK: Yes. We tried to find a way to play the happy ending as an encore if the sad ending came up. I'm not sure what would have happened if it was the other way. We had to do justice to the concept. Every day that he flipped the coin in practice it was tails, so I think it was just destined for the cat to die.

TT: It's no secret that young audiences don't enjoy classical music as much, especially the contemporary music. As a composer, why do you think that is, and what do you think you can do about that?

'If Steven Spielberg came up to me and asked me to do a movie, I would drop everything.'

DK: For why that is, I think it's been a long trend of moving to simpler music with simple chord progressions. This gives the audience the freedom to just enjoy the lyrics. I'm not saying one's worse or better than the other. On what to do about that ... well, I'm not going to be marketing myself to compete with Justin Bieber. I want my music to make a statement, like making

Katzin, Page 24



24 THE TECH FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012

MOVIE REVIEW

Dark humor, *Dark Shadows*

Tim Burton churns out another entertaining gothic film

By Natthida Wiwatwicha

STAFF WRITER

Remember being five and giggling about clumsy characters and silly scenes such as a vampire not seeing himself in the mirror while brushing his teeth, an orphan under a bed sheet trying to scare away a guest, or even a vampire chilling out with stoners before sucking their blood and perhaps inviting Alice Cooper to his house later that week?

Dark Shadows brings you back to those



Resurrected vampire Barnabas Collins (Johnny Depp) presides over his familial home in Dark Shadows.

days. Tim Burton's newest film is based on a horror-fantasy soap opera from the 1960s to the 1970s. This movie version takes place in 1972, when vampire Barnabas Collins (Johnny Depp) escapes from 200 years of confinement in an underground coffin. He had been born into a rich and powerful family with a large fishing business, but when he broke the heart of a witch, Angelique Bouchard (Eva Green), she killed his family and his lover Josette DuPres (Bella Heathcote) and cursed all the following members of the Col-

Angelique, still alive when Barnabas returns, tries to win him back and destroy the fishing business he tries to recover. Barnabas joins up with the current-generation of Collins to fight Angelique. The current dysfunctional Collins family features Michelle Pfeiffer as Elizabeth Collins, her 15-year-old hippie daughter Carolyn (Chloë Grace Moretz), and her malicious brother Roger (Jonny Lee Miller). Roger's son David (Gulliver McGrath) lost his mother at his young age but is able to communicate to her ghost. Mrs. Collins hires into the household a beautiful governess for David, Victoria Winters, who happens to be Josette in one of her past lives. Helena Bonham Carter plays an alcoholic psychiatrist, Dr. Hoffman, who resides with the family and is tasked with healing David's grief.

Dark Shadows is nothing new or exciting, but it is familiar and comforting.

Dark Shadows compares visually to a large collage of Burton's work throughout his lifetime. Think Charlie and the Chocolate Factory plus Edward Scissorhands plus Big Fish plus Mars Attacks! ... The list goes on. The movie is also reminiscent of Burton's classic collection of poems The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories

Dark Shadows

Directed by Tim Burton

Starring Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Eva Green

Rated PG-13

as recurrent images from his writing, such as little pale children or a woman sinking to the bottom of the ocean, now take the form of living characters. Dark Shadows is nothing new or exciting, but rather is familiar and comforting.

Art direction and set design are marvelous as always. The costume design is by Colleen Atwood, who won the Academy Award for Costume Design for Alice in Wonderland in 2010. If one should take one thing back from this movie, it is its visual appeal — as long as the audience is not repulsed by fake blood and absurdity.

Eva Green is gorgeous in her evilness, and Michelle Pfeiffer is stunning in every second of her appearance. Danny Elfman is responsible for the music, selecting pieces from The Carpenters, Barry White (for the violent vampire/witch love scene), Black Sabbath, and Elton John. "Nights in White Satin" by the Moody Blues plays in the opening credits, shifting from the gothic 17th century scene in the most mind-bend-

Dark Shadows is an epic fairy tale, Tim Burton style, with occasional innocent morbidness and flamboyant visuals contrasting depressing grayscale scenes. So if your inner core happens to be a morbid yet happy child who has strange cravings for visual stimulation, Dark Shadows is a good couple hours off from reality. But not everyone fulfills those condition, of course.

On physics and music

Behind the scenes of orchestral piece Schrödinger's Cat

Katzin, from Page 23

physics more accessible. So many concepts in physics are cool and I want to convey that excitement to the layperson, through music. I feel that's a pretty worthy pursuit.

TT: If you had the opportunity to write film music, would you be interested?

DK: That is the dream, if I didn't have to worry about anything else. Well, let me rephrase this. If Steven Spielberg came up to me and asked me to do a movie, I would drop everything. The one limitation of film music is that you're limited to one interpretation of it. If you write programmatic music without the visuals already there, the audience can visualize it themselves. People came to me after the concert to tell me how they understood the characters in the piece - and it was different than what I had in mind. But that's great because people formed their own ideas about what the music meant to them.

TT: Finally, do you have a cat?

DK: Oh, I'm allergic. I'm a dog person. At first, I was thinking of reversing the endings, happy music when the cat dies. ... Just kidding.

TT: I guess cat owners would relate differently ..

DK: Yeah, I spoke to some cat owners and they said they would stay far away from this concert. The whole concept, of flipping the coin, even if the cat dies, it's still a joke. I think it's a little bit of what Schrödinger had in mind. The experiment in itself is absurd to think about.

Be sure to head over to the blogs at http://techblogs.mit.edu for the rest of the interview!

Emily Yau '15 also contributed to this

Getting help is as easy as 1, 2,



Starting May 7th, S3 has extended hours and additional walk-in times! Stop by 5-104 during walk-in hours between 9-10am and 2-3pm or call to schedule an appointment, 617-253-4861.

We would also like to remind you to take advantage of the many resources available for academic, social and personal support. S3, Community Wellness, MIT Mental Health & **Counseling, Housemasters, GRTs, RLAs and Advisors** are all here to support you. If you are feeling overwhelmed, don't go it alone. Working together, we'll find a way.

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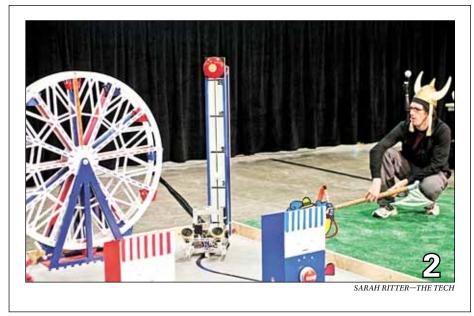
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Extended Hour	s May 7-18
Monday	9-6
Tuesday	9-6
Wednesday	9-6
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FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012

THE TECH 25







Bridge testing for 1.013 (Civil Engineering Design Project) took place in Lobby 7 at noon this Wednesday. Each of six bridges were required to hold 2,500 pounds without failure. Each group was also required to demonstrate that their bridge could safely hold the weight of all team members combined. Also on Wednesday, teams competed in the qualifying round of this year's 2.007 competition. Each team's robot earned points for completing a set of tasks.

SARAH RITTER—THE TECH

1. Scott Landers '12 loads his team's bridge. Inspired by Calatrava's designs, their team took on the challenge of resolving the huge torsion forces that an asymmetrical design creates.

 Rebecca Heywood '12 poses in front of her group's PVC bridge.
 (Left to right) Catherine Johnson '12, Andrew Pierson '12, Meredith Lis '12, Tiffany Cheng '12, and Reece Otsuka '12 with their 2,500-pound-loaded bridge.

4. Civil and Environmental Engineering seniors (left to right) Abhradeep Sarkar, Michael Chen, Julia Hopkins, John Lim, and Nicky Soane hung weights off of

a hanging chain to find the ideal arch geometry for their bridge. Bridge testing for 1.013 took place in Lobby 7 at noon this Wednesday. Each bridge was required to hold 2,500 pounds without failure. Each group was also required to demonstrate that their bridge could safely hold the weight of all

team members combined.

5. A robot flings a mass into the air as part of a task during the 2.007 competition Wednesday.

6. A robot scores points by hitting a lever to complete a task.

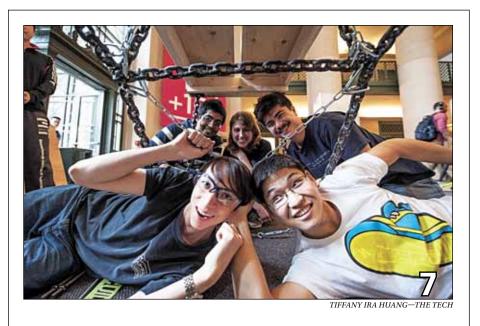
7. Kelsey S. Brigance '12 weighs two robots on the scales of justice after their round resulted in a tie. In

the event that two robots scored the same number of points, the one that weighed less would win.

8. Jonathan E. Rea '14 pilots his robot "Jack." One of the tasks of the 2.007 competition this year was to raise a mass in the air, and some robots, like Jack did this through a ladder mechanism.









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MIT hosts National Taekwondo Championship

By Casey Denham TEAM REPRESENTATIVE

The National Taekwondo Collegiate Championships were hosted by MIT Sport Taekwondo on April



7 and 8 with a record breaking 601 competitors. Although it was a difficult task to organize such a large tournament, the team, led by head coach Dan

Chuang and captains Seth "Matt" Weinberg G, Erika Lee '12, and Tara P. Sarathi '12, had a strong showing and received second in the novice and championship divisions, as well as second place overall with a total of 49 points.

Along with winning first place in Division I and the ECTC Cup, Lee and Weinberg took home MVP awards.

In the novice, or color belt, division, MIT placed second with a total of 37 points. In the yellow belt divisions, Katie Biegel '15 won gold in sparring, Sarah J. Bricault G won bronze in forms, and Danillo J. Ondina '14 also won third in forms, while in the green belt divisions, Latif Alam '12 won gold in sparring and Diego A. Giraldez '15 won bronze in sparring and silver in forms. For blue belts, Alvin Chen '11 placed third in forms, Sharon Tam '11 placed third in forms and silver in sparring, Maria Z. Tou '14 placed silver in forms, Shirley Tsang '14 placed gold in forms, Tam T. Nguyen '13 placed gold in forms.

MIT performed above and beyond in the red belt divisions, with Lori Ling G placing first in forms, Phillip H. Daniel '13 placing silver in forms, Teresa "Ty" Lin '12 placing silver in forms, Hilary T. Monaco '12 placing gold in forms, Angela N. Chang G placing bronze in sparring, Ryan A. Rosario '12 placing bronze in sparring, and Karine T. Yuki '13 placing gold in sparring.

In the championship, or black belt, division, the Engineers placed second with a total of 12 points. Lee placed first in forms and third in sparring and Kristina L. Lozoya '13 placed third in sparring. MIT had a significant alum turnout at the tournament, which is open to athletes who graduated in 2011, including medalists Jason Uh '11, who placed bronze in forms, Chris M. Williams M.Eng '11, who placed gold in forms, and Rebecca Hung, who placed gold in forms '11. Williams and Hung also took bronze in pairs in the poomsae team trials event. Alumi Rene Chen '07 made the Collegiate National Team and was selected as Female Athlete of the Year, while placing gold in individual and triples, and silver in pairs during the poomsae team trials.

Two short weeks after Nationals, the team was on the road to RPI in New York to compete in the final Eastern Collegiate Taekwondo Conference (ECTC) tournament of the year and compete for the much coveted ECTC Cup. Although it was a small tournament, the Engineers kept the fighting spirit throughout the day, earning a total of 619 points, compared to rival Cornell's 496. This led to MIT also winning the ECTC Championship Cup, with a season total of 1,815 points.

The team's hard work this se-

mester on poomsae, or forms, really paid off, with double, triple, or quadruple placings in many divisions and a total of 211 points. For green belt forms, Bricault and Alam both placed third in their divisions, while every blue belt placed, with Tsang placing second, Tou placberg finished off a great season by both placing second.

MIT also proved to be a tough competitor in sparring. Men's A1 (Weinberg, Edgardo "Eddie" Farias '15, Aziz Abdellahi G) placed third, finishing off a very successful season. The real standout performance

es. Women's C1 (Bricault, Casey L. Denham '15, and Jessica J. Yang '15) placed third for the second straight competition. Women's C2 (Biegel and Tiffany Chen G) and Men's C3 (Steven Fine '15 and Cecilio Aponte '15) both reached the quarterfinals.

Along with winning first place



Co-captain Tara P. Sarathi '12 scores a crescent kick on her opponent at the 2012 National Collegiate Taekwondo Championships held at MIT April 7 and 8.

ing fourth, Issac Fenta '14 placing first, and Victor Nevarez '12 placing fourth. As at Nationals, our red belts really shined, with women sweeping the forms division, as Mengfei Yang, Chang, Nguyen, and Monaco, received first through fourth respectively. On the men's side, Daniel placed first, Maksim Stepaneko '12 placed second, and Rosario placed fourth. Black belts Lee and Wein-

of the day was women's A1 (Lee, Sarathi, Michelle W. Chen '14) who won gold against tough teams they had worked all season to beat. Men's B teams double placed, with B1 (Rosario, Stepaneko, Daniel) winning gold and B2 (Fenta, Nevarez, and George T. Cheng '14) winning silver. Women's B1 (Ling, Chang, and Tiffany A. Chen '12) also won silver after a series of tough match-

in Division I and the ECTC Cup, Lee and Weinberg took home both MVP awards. Although it was a tiring series of tournaments, the team held it together to perform their best. Every member contributed, whether in the rings or on the sidelines cheering. These tournaments ended a strong season for the Engineers and next year looks to be just as promising.

Hamels admits to hitting rookie Harper with pitch

Phillies' pitcher Cole Hamels earns a five game suspension and mars his reputation

By J. Austin Osborne

Baseball is a game of unwritten rules. Don't steal bases when you have a big lead. Don't bunt to break up a



no-hitter. Retaliate when one of your teammates is hit by a pitch. It is understood that once you get to The Show, you abide by these rules. There is no need to speak of them

to the media, to your teammates, or to anyone else, for that matter. This is what made Cole Hamels' recent admission to intentionally plunking rookie phenom Bryce Harper all the more

In the first inning of Philadelphia's 9-3 win against the Washington Nationols on May 6. Hamels fired a fastball at Harper, hitting him in the small of the back. Nothing was said, and no one reacted. When Hamels came up to bat in the third inning, he was hit by Nationals pitcher Jordan Zimmerman. Once again, nothing was said, and Hamels took his base. This common baseball occurrence became controversial after the game when Hamels candidly admitted "I was trying to hit him. I wanted to welcome him to the major leagues."

Bryce Harper is one of the most highly touted, but sometimes overly cocky, prospects in recent memory.

He has been in the national spotlight since he was on the cover of Sports Illustrated at the age of 17, but baseball is just as much about earning and giving respect as it is about personal skill. Whether or not you feel that a seasoned veteran like Hamels should have hit a rookie in his eighth major league game, the incident would have gone unno-

Hamels candidly admitted 'I was trying to hit him. I wanted to welcome him to the major leagues.

ticed had he not said anything. This is where Hamels made his biggest mistake. He has become the target of much criticism around the league and earned himself a five-game suspension handed down from Major League Baseball. He has been called "fake tough" and "braggadocious." Cole Hamels is hurting his team by missing a potentially crucial start in this young season, and he is hurting his previously sparkling reputation. In today's game, which is stained by performance enhancing drugs and dishonesty, some may appreciate Hamels' candid remarks, but sometimes unwritten rules are left unwritten for a reason.

Men's rugby reinvented

Team hopes to play in Division II next year

By Thomas A. Villalon Jr.

TEAM REPRESENTATIVE

You don't often hear rugby associated with MIT, but for the 30 players on the MIT Men's



Rugby team, it's something that brings them together. Started in 1949, the club is one of the oldest in Boston and

the founding core of Boston's Super League club. A mixture of different countries, languages, and styles of play, the team has pulled together, seeking to play at their top level at all times. For the past four months, men's rugby has been practicing and preparing to defend the Division III NERFU (New England Rugby Football Union) Cup. Whether playing in snow or sun, the team knows that this is their chance to retain their championship and prove that they can play Division II rugby.

Two years ago, the club was much different. Almost relegated to Division IV, the club came

under the leadership of Coach Sean Christie who changed the way MIT played its game, and the team has been improving since. The next two seasons the club finished second in Division III and won the NERFU Cup. Now with a faster, more aggressive, and more intense style of play, MIT's Men's Rugby has reinvented itself and looks forward to a chance to defend their title.

MIT has posted a 4-1 record against Division II teams.

The result of these continuing changes is visible in the rugby team's current record. This spring season alone, MIT has posted a 4-1 record against Division II teams with strong victories against Charles River (37-0) and Portland (50-26), the club has shown itself to be a threat to higher level teams. Additionally, MIT has scrapped

some tough wins against Old Gold (19-5) and North Shore (27-15), proving that they are ready for the challenge of Division II. However, with its sole loss against Providence (9-46), MIT was reminded that the club has room to improve.

Due to these recent successes, they have a positive outlook. In a conversation with team president Mike P. Byrne G, he noted that the team has "a great mix of talented younger guys and more experienced older guys [in] the club." He did note, though, that success will not occur without challenges. Most particularly is "attracting new undergrad and grad students to the club" as "[the team] faces a lot of competition from football, soccer, and other sports, particularly for undergrads."

In spite of these challeng the club looks forward to a bright future. Fuelled by the dedication of the players and Coach Christie's leadership, the club is ready for the games ahead and ready for the chance to break into Division II.

The MIT Men's Rugby team normally plays in the Division III New England club division, but they currently have a 4-1 record against Division II teams.

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Friday, May 11

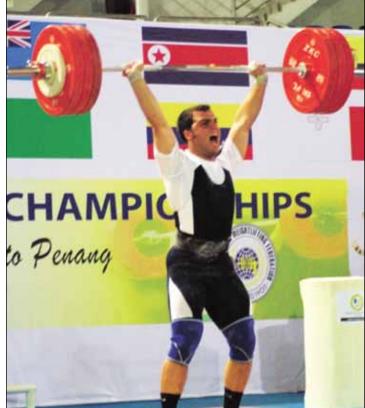
Men's Track and Field NEICAAA Championship Women's Track and Field NEICAAA Championship

10 a.m., Steinbrenner Stadium 11 a.m., Steinbrenner Stadium

Saturday, May 12

Men's Track and Field NEICAAA Championship Women's Track and Field NEICAAA Championship 10 a.m., Steinbrenner Stadium 11 a.m., Steinbrenner Stadium

THE TECH 27 FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2012



Nackoul — Course 2 junior and competitive Olympic weightlifter

Nackoul hopes to be at 2016 Olympics in Rio De Janeiro

Olympics, from Page 28

football, and wrestling. He began lifting to become stronger and more agile, which is not uncommon for many serious athletes.

"After I found out I was pretty good at Olympic Weightlifting, I stopped playing sports one by one," he said, "I eventually stopped playing football after my freshman year here to focus entirely on weightlifting."

Mike also remarked that part of his draw to the sport was from his admiration for his older brother, also an Olympic lifter.

His favorite aspect of the sport is the competitive spirit. "I just fell in love with the competition," he said, "the rest is history."

Mike lives for the feeling he gets walking up the platform, and knowing that it is just him and the

bar. Most often, he feels as if he is just competing with himself.

Balancing MIT academics and weightlifting is very demanding as both pursuits are very taxing, mentally and physically. When Mike is not at MIT, he is working



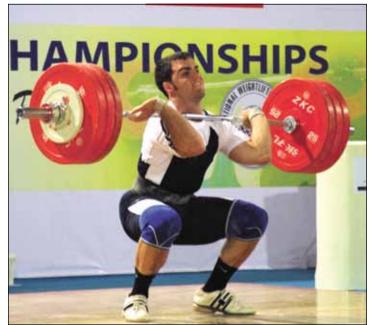
with his coach, Zygmut Smalcerz, (who earned a gold medal for Poland in 1972) in Colorado Springs, Colo. at the Olympic Training

Mike feels that it is his discipline that is most often tested by his training, and he strives not to let himself become overwhelmed. "If you just keep pushing forward and work hard," he said, "most people find that they are capable of a lot more than they realize."

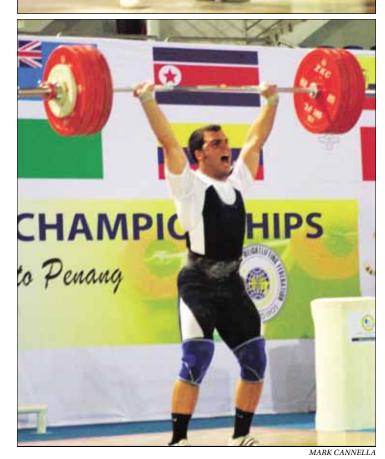
What is his secret?

"I am on a pretty similar schedule for most of the year," he sayd, Depending on what my class schedule is like, I either get up early and go the library to do some work if I have an early class, then lift in the early afternoon after class. Or I go lift in the morning, then go to class. If my class is later in the day, then I do school work after. Either way I get up early, so I also usually go to bed early — I have an old man sleep schedule," Mike explained.

Mike's favorite song is "Jungle Boogie" by Kool and the Kang. He likes to get funky, and you can expect to see Mike representing the USA and MIT at the 2016 Olympics!









MIT ATHLETES GOING FOR GOLD

Mike A. Nackoul aims for the 2016 Olympics in Rio Junior earns bronze in the National Collegiate

Weightlifting Championships for weight class

By Gordon Glober SPORTS STAFF

How can you balance being a world-class weightlifter while studying mechanical engineering at MIT?

Michael A. Nackoul '13 seems to have the answer. While many students at MIT find that the rigorous academics can make finding time for extracurricular pursuits very difficult, Mike makes it look easy.

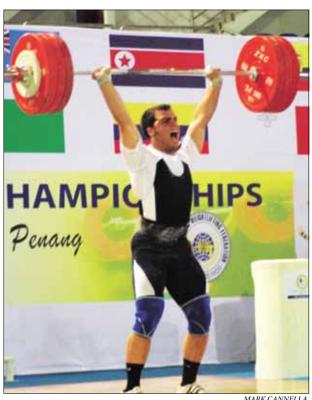
A brother of DKE, Mike recently earned a bronze medal at the National Collegiate Weightlifting Championships for his weight class. This prestigious competition can be considered one of the early stages of Olympic Trials for the sport and Mike excelled during.

The championship can be considered as one of the early stages for the Olympic Trials. Mike's excellent performance placed him eighth overall in the competition. However, since the the USA Olympic Lifting team has decided to take only one male to London this summer, Mike will not travel to the UK this year. But since he is still young for the sport, Mike has taken this news in stride, re-focusing his sights on the 2016 Olympics in Rio De Janeiro.

To give a little background on the sport, Olympic Weightlifting is not just weightlifting in the Olympics. This sport is comprised of two functional lifts, the "snatch" and the "clean and jerk." In short, both lifts are a different means of getting a large amount of weight about your head. In addition to strength, these lifts demand much coordination, focus, and athleticism to be done safely and effectively. During the competition, athletes can attempt each lift three times; the combination of their best weights from each lift determines their score. Mike's personal records are 145 kilograms (320 lbs.) for the snatch and 186 kilograms (411 lbs.) for the clean and jerk.

Mike began lifting when he was around 12 years old. Up until this point he had enjoyed playing baseball,

Olympics, Page 27



Michael A. Nackoul '13 earned a bronze medal for his weight class at the National Collegiate Weightlifting Championships and hopes to represent the U.S. at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro

MIT swimmer qualifies for the Olympic Trials

Wyatt L. Ubellacker will compete in the 50 free at Trials in Nebraska this summer

By Zach Hynes

SPORTS STAFF

Like many MIT students, Wyatt L. Ubellacker '13 is going to be around campus this summer, doing a UROP in Mechanical Engineering. When late June comes around, however, Ubellacker will venture out to an unlikely midsummer destination: Omaha, Nebraska, the site of the USA Swimming Olympic Trials. The Tech talked to Wyatt about his ongoing preparations for the trials and his experiences swimming at MIT.

The Tech: How did you qualify for the Olympic Trials? What events will you be competing in at the Trials?

Wyatt Ubellacker: I'll be swimming in the 50-free. I'm hoping to qualify for the 100-free and the 100-fly this weekend in a meet at MIT. I qualified for the 50-free shortly after the Division III Nationals in the same pool (at IU Natatorium).

TT: Usually, your season is over in March; now, your season is extended and you have another couple months. What's changed about your training as you prepare for the Trials?

WU: The training isn't any different than normal — I'm just training like normal. I'm still adjusting to swimming long course races (when the length of the pool used is 50 meters rather than 25) as 90 percent of my training is done in short course. In the long term though, I think that the long course will actually be better for me, given my height and the need to make more turns in short course

TT: Who are you training with right

WU: This year, the NCAA made an exception to allow student-athletes competing in the Olympic Trials to be trained by their coaches. So, I'm training with my normal coach, MIT coach Samantha

TT: At the Trials, will you know any of the competition? What age range is typically represented at the Trials?

WU: I know a couple of guys from Division III Nationals who will be at the Trials. Most of the competition in my events will be around college-age, but you will see swimmers as young as 14 and as old as 30 or 40 at the Trials.

TT: Coming out of high school, did you want to or consider going to Division I schools particularly for swimming?

WU: I didn't really get fast until my senior year of high school, and even then, only in the 50-free. I could have walked on at Purdue, but ... it's MIT.

TT: You have to be driven in the pool in order to make it to Olympic Trials and are clearly driven academically. How do you think your swimming has affected your work as a student at MIT?

WU: It certainly helps me get things done quicker; I don't have time to mess around on Facebook or anything like that. As far as drive, I'm not sure ... I think that's something that I was born with or that I learned growing up. TT: Headed into the Trials, are you

hoping for a particular time or place? How are you approaching the meet against brand new competition? WU: I want to get my best time. I'm

not going to win, but I think that it will be a good experience.

TT: Four years down the road, would you want to try again if you could?

WU: Obviously, there are a lot of variables involved with that, but I'm not going to stop swimming after I graduate.



Wyatt L. Ubellacker '13 competes at the NCAA Division III Championships. He qualified for the Olympic Trials in the 50 freestyle shortly after

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ALL FEEDBACK IS READ AND VALUED... especially your written comments!